

# Ducklings Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY268556

**Inspection date**

09/07/2010

**Inspector**

Aune Turkson-Jones

**Setting address**

VC Primary School, Weasenham Road, Great Massingham,  
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**Telephone number**

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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*.

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.

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## Description of the setting

Ducklings Pre-School is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of the parents of the children attending the setting. It opened in 1975 and moved to its current premises in 2003. It operates from a mobile classroom, sited in the grounds of the Voluntary Controlled School, situated in the village of Great Massingham. A maximum of 16 children may attend the setting at any one time.

The pre-school opens from 9.00am until 12.00pm from Monday to Friday during school term times, with a twice weekly lunch club. A holiday club runs for five weeks during the school summer holiday from 9.00am until 3.00pm each weekday. Children have access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 18 children from two to five years on roll, of these, 14 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports a small number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children attend from the local area.

The pre-school employs three members of staff. All hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school receives support from the local authority and Norfolk Early Years Support Network.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Duckling's Pre-School provides a thoroughly enjoyable experience for the currently small group of children who attend. The setting is fully inclusive and is able to cater for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Activities are set out at the start of each session and planned so that they meet the needs of the early years children well. The supervisor and her team are passionate about creating memorable learning experiences for all of the children and there is a good capacity for continuous improvement.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that the development of the outdoor play area includes opportunities for children to grow their own plants so that they learn more about the outdoor world
- improve planning to incorporate more opportunities to stimulate children's understanding of the cultural diversity of the wider community
- develop mentor support by utilising existing links in the local cluster group.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Safeguarding policies and measures are excellent. Staff carry out very thorough risk assessments of all areas on a daily and weekly basis, ensuring that all aspects of the setting provide a safe environment for children to learn and play in. The site is fully secure and the only access is via an intercom system and buzzer, connected to the main school entrance. Thorough recruitment procedures are in place and all staff have been subjected to the necessary checks. Staff are trained to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse, and have clear procedures to follow, should concerns be raised. Knowledge is kept up to date through regular training and children are encouraged to adopt safe practices. The necessary policies are in place to support this.

The management of the setting has become a particular strength since the last inspection, with a new and extremely good supervisor in place. The supervisor previously worked in the host primary school and already had successful relationships with the school, management committee and parents. A strong background in the Early Years Foundation Stage, coupled with an enthusiastic close working team, ensures that the provision is of the highest quality and good, continuous improvements are made to secure children's learning and development.

Children benefit greatly from sharing the school's facilities, such as the field and outdoor play areas and from opportunities to socialise with some of the older children. This forms an essential part of the transition for pre-school children, who also enjoy weekly visits to the reception class with the reception teacher and parents. Staff also use this excellent partnership to identify children who may need additional support. Children in the pre-school with special educational needs and/or disabilities, plus the more able children, also benefit from the specialist support of the school. There are also outstanding established partnerships within the community, including an organisation of mothers (Net Mums), the early years alliance and local authority links. Staff may build on these by fostering mentoring links and support through the local cluster groups.

Parents' views are actively sought and half termly questionnaires and newsletters produced, to encourage involvement and enable responsive provision. The supervisor is readily available at the end of each session and parents may discuss any issues with their child's key worker. The pre-school is proactive in its self-evaluation and has an honest and accurate view of its strengths and areas for development, which were identified in a recent development plan. Regular staff meetings and discussions form an essential and ongoing dialogue on the journey to self-improvement.

All areas for improvement, raised in the previous report, have been addressed and changes are now firmly embedded in the provision. A key feature is the changes made to the planning process and the way in which children's progress is monitored through the introduction of progress books, with ongoing monitoring and evaluation, using the Early Years Statutory Framework as guidance. Sessions are structured so that adult-led or child-initiated opportunities for mathematical

learning and creative development are maximised. An example of this was seen when children played in the water-play area with a variety of toys whilst staff encouraged children to explore their numeracy skills through a counting song about the number of toy ducks, which the children keenly joined in with.

Staff help children to develop positive attitudes towards people's differences, by providing a range of resources which reflect diversity, including the use of the computer in the information and communication technology area, and by setting a good example of how to respect each other. Staff could build on this by planning more opportunities to stimulate children's understanding of the cultural diversity of the wider community.

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

Children are engaged and busy throughout their time in the setting, which provides a varied range of planned activities each day. While there is a regular structure to each session, there are ample opportunities for children to move between indoor and outdoor activities and make their own choices. Children are well supported in their learning and a key worker system is in place. Parents are aware of this and can speak regularly with staff regarding all aspects of their child's development. A recent bookstart scheme has been introduced, so that parents can encourage children's communication, language and literacy skills through the summer holiday period.

The range of strategies used to promote learning and development results in children becoming more active, creative learners, with increasing critical thinking skills. The indoor and outdoor areas are set up daily in line with specific aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and adapted to suit the theme of the planning. Examples of current themes are; 'at the beach', 'safari in Africa', 'China' and 'Post Office' and 'shop'.

This setting supports progression towards the early learning goals through play and exploration, and learning is both planned and purposeful. Planning of activities is supported by ongoing observation and assessment, used to ensure that children achieve as much as they can in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Support is put in place for children with any special educational needs, whose needs are identified early. Opportunities for early mark-making and counting skills are woven through all aspects of the pre-school and staff question children to deepen their understanding and knowledge.

Children say that they feel safe and have an extremely good awareness of aspects of safety. Children are encouraged to play safely and resolve their own disputes. Staff promote good hygiene habits and children know that they must wash their hands after using the toilet, and before eating their snacks. Appropriate action is taken when children are ill and suitable steps taken to prevent the spread of

infection. Children have regular opportunities for physical, outdoor activities, including those shared with the school children. Healthy snacks are served daily and there are plans to develop a garden where children can grow some of their own produce. Children sit together at snack time, which is a sociable occasion. Staff translate their high expectations in a calm, reassuring way and children respond positively and behave well in this environment.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
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	2
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
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	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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