



Puddleducks

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY218008
Inspection date	25 January 2006
Inspector	Ann Austen
Setting Address	30a High Street, Croughton, Brackley, Northamptonshire, NN13 5LT
Telephone number	01869 811222
E-mail	
Registered person	Lesley Grant
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

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

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Puddleducks Day Nursery opened in March 2002 and operates from a single storey building in the centre of the village of Croughton in the extreme south of Northamptonshire. The building contains three group rooms and associated facilities. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 34 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year, excluding bank

holidays. There are currently 54 children on roll. Of these 16 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the village and surrounding areas.

The nursery employs 10 staff. Eight of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two members of staff are working towards a qualification. The nursery receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, warm and comfortable childcare environment. They learn the importance of good hygiene practices through daily routines, and older children become increasingly independent in their personal care. For example, they brush their teeth after lunch, wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Older children are beginning to understand that they wash their hands to get rid of germs. This sustains levels of hygiene and helps to prevent the spread of infection. Secure procedures are in place to change babies nappies. Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have up-to-date knowledge of first aid, and appropriate procedures are in place if children are unwell.

All children have daily opportunities to exercise in the fresh air, which promotes their good health and development, and are able to rest and sleep according to their needs. Children go for walks in the village, and visit the park. They use bats and balls, manoeuvre wheeled toys, roll hoops, crawl through tunnels, play parachute games and energetically rock their bodies on the rockers. This helps children to develop the confidence to enjoy moving with control, using their bodies in a variety of ways. Children enjoy manipulating dough and handle tools such as spades to dig in the sand. Babies post shapes into the shape sorter and stack beakers. This develops children's hand-to-eye co-ordination and strengthens small muscles effectively.

Children's good health is promoted by a range of nutritious meals and snacks, for which the nursery has won an award. They enjoy regular fruit, such as apples and raisins for snack and shepherd's pie with carrots, and bananas and custard for lunch. Mealtimes are relaxed social occasions where children sit together around the table to enjoy their food, each others company, and develop good table manners. Staff ensure that parental wishes are respected, for example, that the feeding patterns of babies is consistent with their routines at home.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe environment where risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because potential hazards are identified, and staff supervise the children well. This enables children to develop their ideas and skills as they play. Security of the premises is good, and there are clear procedures in place to ensure

that children are collected by authorised people. For example, passwords are used for extra protection. Children begin to learn the importance of keeping themselves safe by responding to clear guidelines set by staff. For example, children develop an awareness of what to do in an emergency by practising the fire escape plan. Older children know that they must not run inside the premises, and learn to handle tools such as scissors safely. Children are well protected by staff who have a secure knowledge of local child protection procedures and understand their responsibilities for the welfare of the children in their care.

Children are interested in the range of safe, good quality toys and play materials. Staff check the equipment and resources regularly to ensure that they remain safe, and that they are suitable for the children's individual age and stage of development.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children in all areas of the nursery are happy and enjoy their time at the setting. They participate in a suitable range of activities, and gain confidence through regular routines and close relationships with the friendly staff. Children are able to select from the resources provided, and receive appropriate encouragement and support. Staff are developing the use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework for the development of the very young children. However, staff do not always regularly monitor children's progress, and use this information effectively to plan the next steps in children's play, learning and development. Younger children have opportunities to explore using their senses. For example, children feel the soft wool, play in the sand and water and get muddy in the soil. Staff sing to the babies who smile and laugh with enjoyment, and respond to their gestures and sounds. Children show an interest in the illustrations in books, imitate animal sounds and learn new vocabulary. This promotes their language and communication skills. Toddlers are beginning to use their imaginations during role play. For example, they pretend to feed the dolls and use the pots and pans at the cooker in the home corner.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are friendly, happy and confident. Older children persist and concentrate during activities. For example, they persevere as they write their names, colour pictures and make puzzles. Children learn to sit quietly and listen to staff at circle and story time. Relationships are good at all levels, and children are learning to play co-operatively together, to share and take turns. Children are successfully developing their independence as they put on their coats for outdoor play, wash their hands after messy play and pour drinks from the water jug.

Children interact and communicate with growing confidence. They listen at circle time offering valid and relevant contributions in open discussions, and use language to describe what they are doing. For example, children talk about their ideas when constructing models. Children look at books for enjoyment, and enthusiastically sing songs. They develop their early reading skills as they recognise their names from

cards and link sounds to letters. Children learn to communicate with marks and pictures. Older children are beginning to form recognisable letters as they write their name. Children are encouraged to count and older children are beginning to write and recognise numbers. They are beginning to develop their understanding of calculation as they sing number songs and rhymes, such as 'Five Little Monkeys'. However, older, more able children are not always fully challenged to consolidate their mathematical skills further by solving simple number problems. Children create patterns on peg boards, copy sequencing cards and learn about capacity as they play with sand and water.

Children are beginning to learn about the world around them. They go on nature walks, visit the mobile library, plant beans, and learn about the life cycle of the frog and butterfly. Children make dough and enjoy cooking foods, such as, flap jacks. However, they are not always encouraged to find out why things work. Children use the computer and programmable toys to support and consolidate their learning. They explore a range of media and materials. For example, children handle foam, play with water and sand and hunt for objects frozen in ice. Children enjoy using their imaginations in role play. However, they do not always have sufficient props to develop their ideas further.

Children make progress towards the early learning goals because staff plan a range of activities across the six areas of learning. Staff are continuing to develop their knowledge of the foundation stage, including teaching methods. However, observations are inconsistent and assessments of children's progress are therefore not used effectively to plan and build on what children already know. As a result plans do not always show clear learning intentions, and teaching does not always meet the needs of individual children or provide sufficient challenge for older, more able children. Staff are friendly and caring, developing good relationships with the children. They offer reassurance and make good use of praise to motivate and encourage children which promotes their confidence and self esteem.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. Clear routines to the day help young children feel secure and settled. For example, babies are cuddled as they are bottle feed, and sleep routines are respected. Staff set clear and consistent boundaries to manage children's behaviour. As a result children generally behave well and are beginning to develop their understanding of right and wrong. Children are beginning to learn about diversity through the use of resources which promote a wider view of the world. For example, they handle small world figures representing people with disabilities, and celebrate festivals, such as the Chinese New Year. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children's care and welfare are promoted because staff have developed good relationships with parents and carers. Information about the nursery is available to parents through the prospectus and displays, including policies and procedures. Information about children's care and development is shared verbally and in writing

each day. This ensures that parental wishes are respected and the individual needs of the children are met. Parents speak positively about the nursery.

The partnership with parents and carers who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Parents receive written information about the foundation stage. Children are encouraged to bring in items from home to support the theme and colour of the week, and they benefit from the continuation of their learning at home. For example, parents are given sheets for children to practise pencil control and letter formation. Children's achievements and progress are discussed through a combination of informal conversations, access to assessment records and at parent's evening.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care and learning are enhanced by the effective organisation of space and resources. This enables children to move freely between activities and develop their own play and learning. Children benefit from a high proportion of qualified staff who are clear in their roles and responsibilities. Their care and welfare are safeguarded by appropriate documentation, including a range of policies and procedures. However, the register of attendance is not always completed when the children arrive at the facility, and a written record has not been maintained of all medicines administered to children. Information is regularly exchanged with parents to ensure continuity of care.

The leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. Management and staff are committed to the nursery. They regularly reflect on their practice and have clear aims for the children's care and education. Systems are in place for staff recruitment, induction and appraisal, and the professional development of staff are promoted. However, the quality of teaching is not effectively monitored and evaluated. Overall the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to develop written policies for equal opportunities, behavioural management and special needs, and to develop procedures for the safe conduct of any outing. Staff were also asked to conduct risk assessments, to improve practices to prevent the spread of infection, and to ensure that specialist staff have regard to the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs. All policies and procedures are now in place, and daily checks are made to ensure that the premises are safe. This promotes children's safety and welfare. Practices have now improved in order to prevent the spread of infection. This ensures that children are cared for in a clean, warm and comfortable childcare environment. A designated member of staff now takes overall responsibility for special needs and is developing her knowledge of the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

Complaints since the last inspection

Ofsted has received one complaint since April 2004. This was in relation to National Standard 7(health). These concerns were raised about the temperature of the building. Ofsted investigated these concerns by making an unannounced visit to the premises. Based on the information and evidence gained during the investigation visit the provider was found to be meeting the Standard. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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 by Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to develop systems to observe and record what children can do, and use the observations to plan the next steps in the children's play, learning and development
- ensure that the register of attendance is completed when the children arrive at the facility, and that a written record is maintained of all medicines administered to children.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to develop staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage, including teaching methods, to ensure that there is sufficient challenge for older, more able children and that the staff know how to adapt the activities to promote the learning of all children
- continue to ensure that observations and assessments of the children's progress are regularly completed to identify children's achievements, progress, and any learning difficulties against the stepping stones, and that information gained is used to plan the next stage in learning for all children

- continue to develop systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching.

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