



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 146487

DfES Number: 580603

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	16/02/2004
Inspector Name	Margaret Coyne

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Puddleducks Day Nursery (Baldock) Ltd
Setting Address	Butterfield House, Hitchin Street Baldock Hertfordshire SG7 6AE

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Puddleducks Childcare Limited 4515049
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### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Puddleducks Childcare Limited
Address	Butterfield House Hitchin Street Baldock Hertfordshire SG7 6AE

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

### Information about the setting

Puddleducks Day Nursery opened in 1995. The nursery operates from a converted building, which benefits from off road parking and is within walking distance of the centre of Baldock. The nursery operates from nine classrooms and has an outdoor area. The group serves the local community and surrounding areas.

There are currently 118 children from 3 months to 5 years on roll. This includes 31 funded 3 year olds and 7 funded 4 year olds. The group has systems in place to support children with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is open five days a week all year round with the exception of Christmas and bank holidays. Sessions are from 8.00 until 18.00. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are 20 members of staff working directly with the children, 4 of whom are part time. Over half the staff have an early years qualification including teaching, NVQ level 2 and 3 and NNEB. The nursery also employs a cook and cleaning staff. Currently 4 members of staff are working towards a recognised early years qualification.

The nursery receives support from a mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. They are working towards the Herts Quality Standard.

### How good is the Day Care?

Puddleducks Day Nursery Ltd provides a good standard of care for children.

All aspects of the provision are well organised and staff are deployed effectively throughout the nursery. Staff implement the policies and procedures well in most areas. The nursery is working towards a Quality Counts award and continually looks at ways to improve their practise. The operational plan is a working document which has regard to the National Standards for Day Care.

High priority is given to children's safety both in and out of the nursery. However care must be taken with regard to some hygiene issues. Good use is made of the garden and the children have a range of outdoor equipment. Meals at the nursery are of a high standard, the menu offers varied and nutritious meals.

There are effective key worker systems throughout the nursery these enable staff to establish supportive relationships with children and parents. This is particularly effective in the baby room where there is a consistent staff team working directly with the children. In all areas staff plan a stimulating range of activities which the children happily take part in. They play confidently, independently and with support. Children are aware of the boundaries and respond positively to direction from staff. There is a wide range and balance of stimulating and challenging toys and equipment for children to access. However care must be taken to allow children freedom of choice, to play and access activities at their own pace and to relax with books. The role-play areas are changed regularly to provide children with a range of resources to stimulate their imaginations.

The nursery has developed a supportive partnership with parents and carers. They are informed of their child's progress with daily communication sheets and informally each day. Parents have access to their child's records at open evenings or by request. Staff are approachable and friendly and have an open door policy.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

At the last inspection the nursery agreed to ensure the safety of toys and equipment, to make all electrical wires and appliances inaccessible to children, to ensure fire exits are clearly identified and not obstructed, to provide children with drinking water at all times, to devise and implement a system to record any incident, to develop staff knowledge of child protection issues, to keep staff informed of good hygiene practise and procedures to prevent the spread of infection, to ensure information about children's special dietary needs is recorded, updated and shared with staff and to make poisonous plants inaccessible to children. The nursery checks all toys and equipment on a regular basis to ensure they are safe including electrical wires and appliances and a suitable risk assessment is in place. Fire doors are clearly marked and exits have been cleared. Water is available to children throughout the day. A confidential behaviour incident book is in place and records any incidents or restraint of children. Some staff have attended child protection training, this is ongoing and information gained is shared with all staff. Staff are kept up to date with good hygiene practise and procedures to follow to prevent the spread of infection. Information about any special dietary needs are recorded, updated and shared with all staff. The ivy plant in the garden has been made inaccessible to the children.

#### **What is being done well?**

- Children enjoy a range of interesting, stimulating and challenging activities throughout the nursery. Staff are fully involved with the children, supporting them in their care, learning and play. Interaction between children and staff is meaningful and positive and staff are attentive to all the children's needs.

- Children are confident and their feelings of security are well fostered by staff. Staff have high expectations for children to behave well and older children are actively encouraged to become self disciplined and consider those around them. Staff give praise and encouragement at all times and children respond positively to direction from staff.
- Staff display the children's creative work well, through clearly labelled wall displays. Some work is displayed at the children's height, which gives them a sense of pride and self-esteem for their achievements.
- Staff are consistent when working directly with the children. This builds on the children's and parent's relationship with staff and increases their feelings of trust and security particularly in the baby and toddler rooms.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the book area upstairs to ensure children have a comfy and inviting area to relax and share books
- the system for recording accidents, to ensure each accident entry has been shared with parents and signatures have been obtained against each entry
- the promotion of good hygiene practise with regard to the baby room and the wearing of outdoor shoes in this area.

#### **Outcome of the inspection**

Good

#### **CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION**

*All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.*

*As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.*

#### **WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?**

##### **The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
5	Ensure that suitable furniture is available to meet the needs of children. This refers to the book area in the upstairs room.
7	Ensure a parent's or carer's signature is obtained for each entry in the accident books.
7	Ensure good hygiene practise is followed with regard to the wearing of

	outdoor shoes in the baby room.
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## INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

### How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Puddleducks Day Nursery is good. It enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in their mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development and generally good progress in all other areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Children have a positive attitude to learning and enthusiastically take part in activities and topics. Staff plan activities which are well thought out and hold and engage the children's attention and interest, thus providing a positive learning environment. Children enjoy exploring and expressing themselves through play. However on occasion some activities become over directed and children's independence in selecting activities for themselves in a spontaneous fashion is restricted. Staff know the children well and have clear ideas of what they can learn. Assessments have recently been changed and include all areas of learning. These clearly identify what children know and enables staff to move them on. Staff use resources well to support children's learning. This is particularly effective in mathematical development, communication language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children respond well to direction from staff and behaviour is generally good.

Leadership and management is generally good. The nursery benefits from a supportive manager who works closely with a dedicated staff team. They have a consistent approach to all aspects of their work. The manager involves staff in different areas giving them an active role in providing an effective educational programme.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents are given the opportunity to talk informally with staff and attend open evenings to obtain details of their child's progress. Parents are provided with information so they can be involved and extend their child's learning at home.

### What is being done well?

- Staff have developed children's natural instinct to explore and show curiosity with a range of interesting topics about the natural world. Children absorb knowledge about planets, the structure of plants and the key sources of life. This is reinforced through other areas such as books and conversation at group time.
- The staff's relationship with the children is excellent. The nursery provides a good range of toys and resources that meet each child's individual needs and promotes their self-esteem. Children are happy and confident and the staff present themselves as positive role models. The children are learning to respect and value those around them and their environment. Children behave

well and respond positively to direction from staff.

- Staff display the children's creative work well, through wall displays and make good use of labelling to reinforce language skills. This has a positive impact on the children's sense of pride and self-esteem for their achievements.
- Children's understanding of letters and sounds is very good. They recognise all letters of the alphabet and some older and more able children are beginning to read using a commercial reading scheme.
- Staff make excellent use of resources to promote mathematical development. Children confidently count, recognise numbers and have a good understanding of simple calculation and weighing, opposites and recognising different shapes in objects and the natural world around them.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the opportunities for children that will impact on their independence skills when selecting activities for themselves. Enable children time to work and play at their own pace and be spontaneous when selecting from the range of activities on offer.
- the balance between child and adult initiated activities and the over-direction of some activities which can restrict children's ability to think for themselves.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

The nursery has made very good progress since their last inspection. No key issues were identified but all points for consideration have been effectively addressed. Planning is now completed with full details of activities and has been further developed to identify what the children can learn from each activity. Each child is assessed and evaluated and this information is used when planning future activities in order to build on each child's knowledge. Resources are now readily available for children to write and draw independently in each room and at each area of play.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are confident and secure. They are forming attachments with adults and peers and play co-operatively together. Children's curiosity is well developed they have a desire to discover and explore topics such as plants, the solar system and 'myself'. Staff are adept at making these fun and interesting. Children's personal independence skills are well fostered. However they have limited opportunities to access all resources on offer. Children are aware of the boundaries and behave well.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children use language well to express themselves and interact with others. They enjoy story time and take part with given roles in the story of Chicken Licken. They have a good knowledge of letters and sounds and some can read simple words and books. However, children do not access the books unless directed by adults. Children's hand writing skills are well developed with formal and informal opportunities to write. Their pencil control is adept as they draw and trace letters and pictures.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children use a variety of resources to promote their knowledge of different mathematical concepts such as counting, matching, calculation and comparing. They match cards in the lotto game and can recognise and count numbers up to twenty-five when finding a mat at snack time. Their awareness of opposites is skilfully fostered by staff who reinforce this in all areas of play. Children have a good concept of shape and clearly identify different shapes from their surroundings and the natural world.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children show great interest in the world around them. They have absorbed a wealth of knowledge about the solar system, the structure of plants and how life is sustained with the sun, soil and water. Staff discuss how rain is formed and children understand the concept of evaporation. Children have access to a computer and can operate a range of different programmes. They have a good awareness of different cultures and beliefs and can sing rhymes in Russian.



**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children have opportunity to climb, balance, peddle, throw and kick balls and manipulate hoops developing their large motor skills. They can manage their bodies to create intended movements i.e. when working on all 'fours' being a dog on the beach. Children manipulate tools with skill and dexterity for example threading beads, using scissors, pencils and pouring sand and water. Children have a growing awareness of keeping healthy which is well fostered by topics and conversation with adults.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children enjoy both child and adult led craft activities. They explore colour, texture and different techniques when engaged in creative projects as a group or on their own. Children take part in music sessions with a visiting music teacher and use a range of musical instruments. They are enthusiastic singers and enjoy song and rhyme. Their imagination is well fostered through role-play situations, which are supported by staff and adapted to meet changing topics i.e. a seaside theme.

**Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.**

### **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

### **WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES**

- increase opportunities for children to develop their independence skills when selecting activities and resources, to enhance their ability to work spontaneously and at their own pace
- develop an appropriate balance between adult and child initiated activities to enable children to plan and think for themselves.

*The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.*

## **SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS**

### **STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON**

*Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.*

### **STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION**

*The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.*

### **STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY**

*The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.*

### **STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

*The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.*

### **STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT**

*Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.*

### **STANDARD 6 - SAFETY**

*The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.*

### **STANDARD 7 - HEALTH**

*The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.*

### **STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK**

*Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.*

### **STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

*The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.*

### **STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)**

*The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is*

*proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.*

#### **STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR**

*Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.*

#### **STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

*The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.*

#### **STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION**

*The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.*

#### **STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION**

*Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.*