

Puddleducks Day Nursery (Baldock) Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique reference number | 146487 |
| Inspection date | 22/02/2011 |
| Inspector | Alison Reeves |

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| Setting address | Butterfield House, Hitchin Street, Baldock, Hertfordshire, SG7 6AE |
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| Type of setting | Childcare on non-domestic premises |
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Description of the setting

Puddleducks Day Nursery (Baldock) Ltd, registered in 1995. It operates from a converted building in Baldock, Hertfordshire. Children have access to an outdoor area. They are open each weekday from 7:30am to 6:15pm throughout the year.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 78 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 111 children aged from four months rising to five years on roll, attending various sessions. The setting welcomes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and supports children with English as an additional language.

There are 22 members of staff working with the children including the manager. Most members of staff have relevant Early Years qualifications. The manager and deputy both have qualifications at this level. Two staff are currently on training courses at level three.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are making good progress in this welcoming setting. They are well supported and benefit from a team of dedicated staff who have a good understanding of each child's individual needs. Children are valued and play a vital role in shaping the provision of activities. Policies and procedures are generally implemented effectively to promote children's welfare and safety. Relationships with parents are very well established and promote extremely effective partnership working and those with other providers are strong. Self evaluation is embedded and demonstrates the commitment to further developing practice to promote improved outcomes for all children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, this relates to the need for robust hygiene procedures
- ensure resources are well maintained, appropriate and organised to bring the maximum benefit to children, this relates to books, musical instruments and outdoor resources

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded and protected in the setting because of the robust vetting procedures and policies relating to children's medical and dietary needs that are consistently implemented. Senior staff are knowledgeable about local safeguarding policies and have effective procedures in place to manage any concerns they may have about children in their care.

Staff make effective use of up-to-date risk assessments to support them in ensuring the areas used by the children are safe. Regular health and safety audits promote prompt action in dealing with minor maintenance issues. This means that children are able to move safely and freely around the building.

Staff are knowledgeable about the Early Years Foundation Stage and use this well to support children in their learning. They regularly attend training to expand their knowledge of particular aspects of care and education practice. The environment is attractive, well organised and accessible to the children. The lovely displays of children's work and photographs reflect the broad range of engaging activities. The free flow for children means that they are able to thrive and make good progress in their development. Most resources are used effectively. However, care of the books, selection and quantity of musical instruments and the organisation of the garden require some additional attention, ensuring children benefit fully from the planned activities.

The setting is very aware of its strengths and weaknesses. The team continually looks for ways to improve the provision for the children and to this end sets themselves ambitious and appropriate targets. Most of the recommendations arising from inspection and issues resulting from various evaluation tools are promptly and effectively addressed. For example, supporting children's transition to primary school with the photo books of each of the local schools. This enables children to become familiar with environment and ask questions about their new setting.

Relationships with parents and carers are superb, there is a very high level of engagement. Staff obtain useful information about each child such as, care routines, favourite activities and interests. This means that parent's wishes and children's individual needs are effectively met. Parents reliably share important information about their child's starting points and staff continue to up date them on children's progress. Regular newsletters and posters inform parents of special events and topics planned. Staff frequently share the summary assessment sheets and children's next steps with parents. This means that they can become involved in their child's learning and each child is well supported in making good progress towards the early learning goals. Excellent parent participation in questionnaires and the clear feedback is highly beneficial in identifying strengths and weaknesses. Established relationships with other provisions and professionals involved with children are effective and contribute well to supporting children's welfare and learning.

Staff offer sensitive support to children who have additional needs. They readily adapt activities to ensure that all children can access them. An effective equal opportunities policy is regularly reviewed and supports the staff well. This means that the individual needs of all children are met and all children are included fully in the life of the setting. Inclusion is given high priority in the setting. Staff create an attractive environment that celebrates diversity of cultures and languages in the wider world. This creates an atmosphere that makes all feel welcome.

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

Children are confident and self-assured. They understand how to stay safe as they move carefully and easily exploring the environment. They learn to use equipment safely. Children receive gentle prompts from staff to ensure they develop an understanding of their own safety and that of others. For example, when a child bumps their head another child is quick to get the Mr Bump ice pack from the freezer, showing a great deal of care and concern. Strong relationships ensure children have the support of staff that they trust.

Children are learning about good hygiene practice as they usually follow appropriate routines. However, staff do not consistently role model best practice across the setting and robust monitoring of the procedures is needed. Most children are good at washing their hands and demonstrate their knowledge of the importance of clean hands in preventing the spread of germs. Children enjoy a varied range of meals and snacks prepared from scratch. This enables them to try new foods and the weaning menu supports babies in eating an increasingly varied diet. Children learn about health and body awareness through interesting topic based activities, discussions on how the body works and by joining in enthusiastically with planned energetic activity sessions. The garden is included in planning so children experience the natural environment as part of their every day learning throughout the year. Consequently they are knowledgeable about the weather, different seasons and are keen to do more gardening in the spring and summer. This means that children are developing healthy habits that contribute to their future well-being.

Babies and children are confident communicators using their voices from an early age. Staff respond well to the vocalisations of the very youngest children and they use songs and rhymes, supported by signing to explore language and communication. Older children participate well in group activities where they demonstrate speaking and listening skills in both English and Spanish. The support from staff means children understand conversation and enjoy experimenting with phrases they have heard. Children are keen users of books and readily select this activity in free play. Children are surrounded by a wealth of print and this helps them to develop their own mark making and writing for purpose. Children are increasingly able to solve problems. They are confident in using numbers as labels and readily sort objects. They use numbers and counting in popular games such as What's the time Mr Wolf? Children from an early age develop their understanding of technology as they use push button toys, role play with telephones and progress

to independent use of the computer.

Children enjoy creative and messy play, relishing the experience of handling malleable materials, sand and water. The interesting range of activities reflected in the artwork displayed around the setting shows how children see the world and express their ideas. Frequent observation of children supports staff in identifying achievements and effectively planning for each individual child. These are well documented to show progression and these are regularly shared with parents.

Children behave well and are developing a clear understanding of the appropriate behaviour boundaries. This is because staff give clear explanations and support children in their interactions with others. Children are valued and respected. By listening to children and working closely with them staff ensure children are at the heart of the setting. Children show respect for themselves and others. They are introduced to different cultures, languages and beliefs through the celebration of festivals, practical experiences and the use of a variety of resources that feature positive images of people and promote diversity.

Annex B: the Childcare Register

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| The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: | Met |
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| The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: | Met |
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