

Puddleducks Day Nursery (Witham)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY276157
Inspection date 28/03/2011
Inspector Geof Timms

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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).

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.

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

Puddleducks Day Nursery opened in 2001 and was last registered in July 2004. It operates from purpose built premises on the site of New Rickstones Academy in Witham, Essex. The children have access to enclosed outdoor facilities. The nursery serves the local area.

The nursery opens five days for 52 weeks a year. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.30pm. Children attend for a variety of the sessions on offer. There are currently 92 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. A maximum of 56 children aged between three months and five years may attend at any one time. The nursery is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. It is in receipt of funding for early education places. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

There are 16 members of staff who work with the children. Of these, two hold National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) at level 2, 11 hold NVQs at level 3 and three hold NVQs at level 4. The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of The Essex Day Nurseries Association (EDNA).

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The nursery's recently built accommodation provides an excellent setting for children's high quality learning experiences. The indoor and outdoor environments are used extremely well to provide highly stimulating activities for the different ages and needs of the children, who all achieve outstanding levels of progress. The management of the nursery is fully aware of its strengths and weaknesses. It is continually looking to improve through a rigorous and highly accurate self-evaluation system. This is evident in the current plans to develop staff's assessment skills further. This willingness to seek out new ideas and expertise shows there is an excellent capacity to improve further.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- developing further the assessment and recording of children's progress to make learning records more accessible to parents, teachers and other settings to support their future learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The staff have an excellent understanding of the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They helped to design the new premises, which cater exceptionally well for the different ages and abilities of the children who attend. The indoor and outdoor environments are extremely safe and secure and all staff have received extensive training in how to safeguard children. Safeguarding procedures, such as risk assessments and inductions for new staff, are highly detailed and rigorously practised. All records are extremely well kept and evacuation records, medical records and all other procedures are very detailed and clearly implemented. Very clear rules are in place concerning the safe use of modern technology. All staff are exceptionally clear about their roles and the key worker system ensures children feel very well cared for. The management ensure all staff are thoroughly vetted prior to starting at the nursery. Children are very well supervised and play in an environment which is extremely safe and suitable for their needs.

Staff have established a highly positive ethos throughout the nursery, so children are happy and behave very well. Resources are of an excellent quality and quantity and are very well deployed, so children are kept continually stimulated and engaged. The nursery regularly engages in self-evaluation, and takes into account the views of parents, children, other settings and the school staff when identifying areas for improvement. Currently, the nursery is reviewing its assessment practice to try and make children's learning records clearer for other users, such as Reception class teachers when children start school and to staff at other early years settings.

Children's individual needs are further supported by the nursery's exemplary links with other agencies. It actively seeks out advice and training opportunities to enhance children's welfare. The staff have established excellent links with other settings, both locally and within the Puddleducks group, and this nursery is occasionally used as a model of exemplary practice. Parents speak very highly of the provision at the nursery, and of how happy they are with their children's excellent progress. The nursery has recently set up a parents' forum to further extend parents' engagement. They have access to a 'news and events' notice-board, which contains reliably updated information. The nursery also provides care for the children of very young parents who are still in education. The support and advice offered to them is very effective and highly praised, as it enables them to continue their studies. Parents also praise the excellent way staff support their children by taking full account of their individual medical and dietary needs. Excellent information is available for parents through a daily report booklet, which they can access freely and which informs them of their child's experiences that day.

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

Children make excellent progress at this bright and lively nursery. Samples of their work show the wide variety of activities they enjoy. Parents comment on their pride at their child's significant progress. Staff expertly use observations and assessments to highlight children's next steps, and planning shows that these cover every area of learning. Children's enjoyment is clear as they positively respond to staff's suggestions and play harmoniously with each other. They are encouraged to take part in an excellent range of creative work, and create vivid paintings and collages. Very detailed planning shows that a host of individual topics and themes are covered each term. Most recently, the children enjoyed making Mother's Day presents from salt dough. Throughout activities, staff are skilled at interacting with children to continuously encourage and promote their speaking and social skills.

Children show a great fondness for stories, and their early reading skills are strongly encouraged by staff. As part of book week children made some excellent collages of animals from their favourite tales and from their imaginations. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is exceptionally well provided for as they regularly visit a nearby woodland to explore and interact with their natural environment. Early writing skills are encouraged through mark-making opportunities in the very well resourced sand pit. Children's home backgrounds are sensitively celebrated and an appreciation of diversity and equality is strongly encouraged. For example, children learnt about life in Ireland during their St Patrick's Day theme. In addition, regular world celebrations, such as Chinese New Year and Christmas, are also part of children's rich experiences. Children take it in turns to take the travelling 'teddy bear' home and on holiday with them so they can write about and share their outside experiences with staff and friends. This demonstrates the high quality personal, social and emotional development children experience within the nursery.

Children relish being outdoors and enjoy daily opportunities to be physically active. The outdoor area is excellently resourced and allows children to become involved in a wide range of activities, some of which are adult-led and others they initiate themselves. For example, children show great attachment to the 'rowing boat' toy, and staff have extended their enjoyment of this by teaching them traditional rowing and sailing songs. Children demonstrate a keen awareness of their safety when using toys and equipment sensibly and when they show excellent behaviour towards each other. They enjoy very healthy meals and snacks prepared in the nursery's own kitchen and have an excellent understanding of hygiene and nutrition. Children's skills at using new technology are extremely well developed. Staff encourage them to use a variety of information and communication technology to record their work.

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

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| How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage? | 1 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement | 1 |

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity | 1 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement | 1 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers | 1 |

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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| The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning | 1 |
| The extent to which children feel safe | 1 |
| The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which children make a positive contribution | 1 |
| The extent to which children develop skills for the future | 1 |

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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