

# Ducklings Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY420024  
**Inspection date** 27/09/2011  
**Inspector** Patricia Champion

**Setting address** Eastwood Memorial Hall, Rayleigh Road, LEIGH-ON-SEA,  
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**Type of setting** Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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 privately owned. It opened in 2011 and operates from the Eastwood Memorial Hall in Leigh-on-Sea, Essex. Children share access to an enclosed, outdoor play area. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Operating times are from 9am until 12noon, with a lunch club operating until 1pm according to demand.

There are currently 21 children aged from two to four years old on roll. Children aged three- and four-years-old receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school serves the local community and supports a small number of children who have English as an additional language. The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The pre-school employs three members of staff, of whom two including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is one member of staff currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are interested, engaged and have fun in the pre-school. They make their own choices from a generally good range of accessible activities and resources. Children make effective progress in their learning and development as staff are focussed on providing experiences that meet each child's needs and learning priorities. Good partnerships with parents and external agencies ensure that children thrive as important information is shared. The staff demonstrate an accurate awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and take effective steps to identify and action any areas needing further improvement.

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

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

- extend use of resources and enhance the play environment to consistently inspire and challenge children's thinking in all areas of learning, both indoors and outside
- develop ongoing assessment to enhance the overview of children's progress and to ensure that there are no gaps in learning.

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

The essential documentation that ensures the efficient running of the pre-school and helps protect and care for children is systematically organised. Robust safeguarding procedures and recruitment processes are in place. The clearly written policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and shared with staff and parents. Staff show a good knowledge and understanding of their responsibility to report any possible cases of child abuse or neglect. Safety and security are given high priority and any visitors are closely monitored. Risk assessment is continually undertaken and hazards are minimised effectively so that children can play and move around the pre-school without coming to any harm.

The staff team are motivated and committed to the raising and monitoring of achievement for all children. Parents' views are valued and consequently, children benefit from everyone's commitment to their learning and development. Staff work well as a team and constantly review their practice through self-evaluation, appraisals and staff meetings. Training events are regularly attended and staff trial new ways of working to continually improve the way the setting is organised. They work hard to overcome the constraints regarding the premises and new resources are continually being purchased. There is an action plan to improve the outdoor area. However, the staff do not consistently make best use of the current resources to challenge children's thinking and inspire them to achieve as much as they can, when indoors or outside.

The uniqueness of each and every child and their family is really valued. The staff work closely with parents to meet the individual needs of the children. They find out all the necessary information right from the start so that they can plan activities in tune with interests, enthusiasms and capabilities. Systems are in place ready to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and visual prompts are available to support children with English as an additional language.

Parents make very positive comments on how well their children have settled into the pre-school and appreciate the communication and commitment of the staff team. They receive well-written, accurate information about the running of the pre-school and are kept up to date with any changes through regular newsletters and via notice boards. The daily exchange of information between key persons and parents ensures that children's changing needs are met and provides continuity of care. Formal opportunities are also provided for consultation with key workers when children's development records are viewed. Some parents are taking the opportunity to add their comments about their children's learning to the development records. Social occasions, such as sports days are well attended. The pre-school has good links with other early years providers and schools, as the staff recognise the importance of this in helping children with the transition to their reception year.

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

Children are happy, confident and spontaneous. They develop positive attitudes towards learning and follow the good examples set by the staff team. Children are very interested in the learning experiences available and concentrate well. Even the youngest children spend long periods of time absorbed in an activity, such as carefully pouring water from measuring jugs through funnels into containers. Children behave very well and respond positively to staff. They learn to play harmoniously together when sharing play materials and taking turns. Activities are planned to link with festivals and traditional events. The everyday use of play figures, dolls and books that represent diversity ensure that children develop a positive attitude towards others and learn about the wider world.

Children are becoming confident communicators. They discuss news from home, numbers and colours and with the staff and each other. They recognise their names at registration and start to form recognisable letters when mark making. Children sit attentively during group activities and really enjoy stories and they sing popular action rhymes with gusto. They use their imagination and express themselves creatively in different ways. For example, children explore play dough and different paint techniques, use a variety of materials to make collages and use props to act out different role play scenarios.

Children are effectively developing the skills they need for future learning. Staff use a good variety of teaching methods to help children to make progress and adapt their questioning skills to take account of individual children's level of understanding and interest. Children's individual learning journals are progressing well and contain positive observations of achievements across the areas of learning with photographic evidence, examples of the children's work and ideas for next steps in learning. Further consideration for developing the systems for ongoing assessment, has the potential to enhance the overview of children's progress and help ensure that there are no gaps in learning.

Staff interact very effectively with the children as they play, explaining how to use the toys and equipment safely. Regular fire drills are practised so that all children and staff know what to do in the event of an emergency. Children's health is promoted well, as all the necessary steps are taken by staff to prevent the risk of infection and everyone follows important hygiene routines. Healthy eating is actively supported and children enjoy independently pouring themselves a drink of water whenever they feel thirsty. Plenty of activities are planned to promote children's physical development. Children go on outings to the local park and community workers from a football club visit to encourage children to take part in energetic games and help develop their coordination.

## 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>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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