

Ducklings @ Monkston Park

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY437560

Inspection date

19/03/2012

Inspector

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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 @ Monkston Park is one of four pre-schools run by Ducklings Ltd. It opened in 2011 and operates from the community hall in Monkston Park, Milton Keynes. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 40 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 28 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Some children are learning English as an additional language. There are funded early years places for most children. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 9.15am until 11.45am, and from 12 noon to 2.30pm. Children can attend all day with the provision of a lunch club.

The manager and all of the staff team hold an appropriate early years qualifications ranging from National Vocational Qualification level 3 and 4. One member of staff is working towards a degree level.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's needs are effectively met within a welcoming and inclusive environment. They are making good progress in most areas of their learning. Systems for monitoring progress are well developed. Overall children develop appropriate skills in learning to keep themselves healthy. The provision has a sound capacity for continual improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further encourage children's awareness of healthy practices with regard to hygiene for example hand drying practices
- improve the range of resources that help children find out about and learn how to use appropriate information technology such as computers and programmable toys.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The management team and practitioners have a strong understanding of their duties and responsibilities to safeguard children. They have appointed a designated person to manage safeguarding concerns and policies and procedures underpin their practice. There is a robust recruitment procedure in place. This helps ensure that adults working with children are safe to do so. The management team takes measures to ensure that the premises are risk assessed and a safe environment is

maintained. Children gain the skills to keep themselves safe because practitioners encourage children to take calculated risks in a managed environment.

The management team and practitioners work well together to organise appropriate systems. This enables the provision to support the welfare and learning of children. They work closely with their local authority and are beginning to show progress and development within their service. For example, they have made changes to procedures for establishing starting points. This has had a positive impact on children. The provision is not fully established in some areas such as making full use of the outside space. However, they are able to share their ambitions for children's learning in this area. Whilst there is no self-evaluation process in place, the management and practitioners are motivated and meet regularly to address future planning issues.

The management team effectively uses the resources they have available. They provide both inside and outside spaces for children to explore. Learning resources are varied and stimulating. However, resources to support information, communication and technology are basic. Practitioners have flexible planning which incorporates children's interests and extends their experiences. They challenge children's knowledge and skills and help children consolidate their learning. Practitioners establish clear starting points and use these to measure progress against. Children's learning journey records clearly show where they are making progress. Children make good progress as a result of the teaching support they receive and the environment they are in.

Practitioners appropriately and actively promote equality and diversity. They build strong key worker relationships with parents and this enables them to focus on children's individual needs. Planning incorporates seasonal, cultural and religious festivals which expand children's knowledge of different communities. Those children who are learning English as an additional language feel valued because their own language is sometimes incorporated into learning experiences. Well chosen story books, posters and resources which reflect children's home backgrounds and those of other people help children to understand the society they live in.

Practitioners build highly positive relationships with parents. They ensure there are clear and accessible channels to communicate and this enables the two-way flow of information. Parents feel valued because practitioners are interested in the experiences and learning opportunities children have while with parents. They feel informed about planning. Their cooperation in supporting children's learning is encouraged through a shared responsibility to provide resources in support of project work. Parents feel able to access information on children's progress both at the beginning and end of each play session. The provision has established relationships with the early years development team to look at quality assurance issues. They work in partnership with child protection agencies. They have access to special educational needs coordinators to support those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They recognise the importance of sharing information to offer children continuity in their care and learning. The provision is making progress in establishing relationships with local schools to support

children's transition between the two.

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

Children separate well from parents and settle quickly. This is because there is a strong focus on practitioners working with parents to support the transition from home into the provision. All children are relatively new and for most this is the first time they have experienced being away from home. However, they build secure relationships with practitioners. They are confident enough to select resources and play independently. Younger children are generally happy to play along side others and are gaining skills in sharing and turn taking with the support of practitioners. Older children show caring attitudes and help younger children to access more difficult resources. They have access to resources which encourage their acceptance and inclusion of others. Overall children manage their own behaviour well. Practitioners provide good role models of behaviour and are helping children build friendships. Children play safely, they understand the boundaries and listen to instructions from the practitioners.

Children show good awareness and gain skills in being healthy. They enjoy playing with a variety of resources, which promotes physical activity while playing outside. They gain awareness and increased control over body movement through the experiences they receive. Overall children are learning good personal hygiene practices. They take part in hand washing routines. Visual aids in the form of posters, project work such as oral hygiene and good role models help children learn healthy habits. However, towels for drying hands are communally used by children. Consequently their health is potentially compromised. Snacks are offered on a rolling programme. Children are able to make healthy choices from the selection of foods and drinks on offer. Parents are encouraged to provide those children who stay over lunch periods with healthy lunch boxes.

Children are fully engaged in learning through play. This is because practitioners draw children into activities and encourage full participation through good quality conversational interactions. Children enjoy story-telling activities with puppets and engage in looking at books quietly, independently or in small groups. Good picture and word labelling, supports children's familiarity with the meaning of written word. Mark-making resources allow children to practice the skills they will need to write. Children enjoy exploring puzzles and construction equipment. Some count confidently in units. Practitioners promote the use of mathematical concepts such as full and empty and talk about one more and one less. Children have limited play and learning experiences related to information, communication and technology. However, they are able to access a range of natural resources such as pine cones, pebbles, corks and shells which supports their sensory awareness. Children particularly enjoy playing with role play resources mimicking their understanding of the wider world creatively.

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

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
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	3
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	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