

Ducklings

Emerson Valley Hall, Roeburn Crescent, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK4 2DF

Inspection date	05/07/2013
Previous inspection date	24/10/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children with additional needs make good progress at the nursery because staff understand how to offer all children the support they need.
- Children make very good progress in their speech and language because staff support them in small groups and as a large group, to build upon their vocabulary and understanding.
- Children are independent and capable. They take measures to protect themselves from the sun and undertake tasks for themselves such as tidying away toys.
- Children behave well and are courteous and respectful of each other because staff show them the same respect.
- Staff evaluate the care they provide with consultation with parents and children and this helps them to rapidly improve areas of weakness

It is not yet outstanding because

- Some toys are not fully functioning to children's satisfaction which means they become frustrated at times.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector spoke with parents, staff and children.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector looked at a range of required documentation including safeguarding policies and children's development files.
- The inspector observed children at play in the garden and indoor area.

Inspector

Hayley Marshall

Full Report

Information about the setting

Ducklings Pre-School registered in 2004 and it is run by Ducklings Ltd. The pre-school operates from two rooms in a local community building in Emerson Valley, Milton Keynes. There is access to a secure outdoor play area. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9.15am to 11.45am and from 12midday to 2.30pm during term time, with a lunch club available to families who require it. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years. There are 42 children on roll from two years to four-years-old and they attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who are learning to speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs eight staff and of these, six staff hold appropriate level 3 qualification and one member of staff has a level 2 qualification. It is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- extend systems used to check that equipment provided for children is fully functioning to their satisfaction, in order to prevent frustration, and to support learning through explorative play as well as possible.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff understand how to support children's learning well and provide a wide range of learning opportunities. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-led activities. For example, when children first arrive at the pre-school they sit together and learn about the days of the week, the months of the year and the weather. This is a lively time where children are ready and able to share their ideas and all remain engaged. Staff extend children's learning by introducing children to the letter sounds as they find the day of the week which starts with 'F'. The staff playfully ask children if it is snowing outside. Children find this funny and say that 'It is sunny.' and when asked what they need to wear, many share their ideas, such as 'sun glasses', 'hats' and 'sun cream'. This activity helps to promote children's knowledge of sun safety; as they go into the garden to play they find a hat to wear, showing their understanding.

Children make rapid progress in their speech and language. This is partly because the way staff plan group activities allows children to think, share their ideas and ask questions.

Staff model language well by talking to children clearly about what they are doing throughout the day. Children 'read' stories with staff and sing rhymes which help them to develop pitch and tone as they tell the story in a quiet voice and then a louder voice with the aid of puppets. Children can use pencils and crayons to draw and make marks indoors and outdoors. They take paper and pencils with them when going outside, practising their early writing. Older children display impressive skills in writing their own names, and spelling out each letter as they attempt to write new words. This helps them to become prepared for their move into school as they acquire the important skills they need to be successful in future learning.

The pre-school staff communicate effectively with parents to ensure they are aware of what their children are learning. Summaries of children's progress help parents to know how they can support children's learning at home. When parents share their own observations of what children can do, staff value these and include them in children's records. The pre-school staff support children who need additional help particularly well. They recognise when children are not progressing as they expect and seek additional guidance to ensure that individual plans cater for children's unique needs. Close working with other agencies helps the staff team to give targeted support. This helps children to make good progress given their individual starting points. Children who need extension in their learning experiences receive fresh challenges as staff find ways to further engage them and foster their curiosity. Staff observe children and make accurate assessments of their learning. This means that they can plan for children's next steps in learning and consequently, help them to progress well.

Children use tools with increasing skill as they are given freedom to cut out shapes and mix paint with brushes as they experiment with colours. Children play in the well-designed garden to develop their physical skills. They crawl along pushing cars and exercise their bodies along to rhymes as they use their large muscles. Children take toys along with them in their play helping them to lead their own learning. However, sometimes equipment is not in working order, which prevents children from playing as they wish. This sometimes leads to children becoming frustrated.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children settle well at the pre-school. They arrive enthusiastically and know their routine. Children want to share experiences with staff and seek them out to show them their pictures. Staff know children and their families well and talk about their home lives. This helps children to feel secure and they build close bonds with their key people.

Staff are vigilant in maintaining a clean and hygienic environment for children. They ensure that children who are unwell do not attend and deal with children who are unwell in an effective manner. The pre-school management has rigid procedures in place to ensure that they reduce the likelihood of the spread of infection. For example, staff use hand sanitisers and separate buckets and mops for cleaning up bodily fluids and general spills. Nappy changing times are well organised. Staff communicate to others when they are changing nappies and staff keep a log of the time this is done to share with parents.

Children learn about how to keep themselves free from germs as they wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet.

Children learn about healthy lifestyles as they eat snack which is healthy and meets their needs and enjoy fresh air and exercise as part of their routine. When children play in the garden they know that they need to shelter from the hot sun and apply sun cream. They understand about managing some risks for themselves as they use large equipment, taking turns as they do so. Children take responsibility as they tidy away toys before they eat their lunch.

Children speak to each other with courtesy and respect. This is because staff speak to them in a manner that is polite and helps them to feel that what they say and think is important. For example, when children do something that staff approve of, they say 'thank you', so reinforcing the positive behaviour. Older children take care of younger ones helping them to feel confident and safe.

The manager is very proactive in preparing children to experience a smooth transfer to the next stage of their early education. She attends the setting children will attend and builds strong relationships with teachers. The pre-school welcomes teaching staff to attend the nursery to observe children and help to get to know them. Staff equally value the contribution of parents. They support parents closely when children first start at the pre-school and keep them fully informed about children's progress through settling-in reports.

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

This inspection was brought forward as the result of a complaint. Ofsted, the regulating body, carried out an unannounced visit to the pre-school. This found that the pre-school was not meeting all legal requirements in respect to the induction of new staff. This was because references were not always obtained from external sources. As a result, the provider was issued with a Notice to improve. At the time of this inspection, the pre-school has put in place new measures which ensure that staff induction is rigorous. Staff understand their responsibilities in relation to keeping children safe. They know how they can share any concerns about children's welfare. Staff check the environment where children play to assess it for potential hazards and take steps to minimise these.

The manager introduces action plans to tackle areas of weakness. Her vigilance in monitoring these means that improvement has been rapid. This demonstrates a positive attitude to sustain improvement. Self-evaluation is ongoing and the pre-school seeks the views of parents to help them assess strengths and weaker areas. They communicate findings of questionnaires to assure parents that their opinions matter. Children share their views by talking about what they like and dislike and what activities they wish to have out. Local authority advisors conduct audits that further help the pre-school to review the care they provide. Recommendations from the previous full inspection have been fully addressed. Consequently, all involved show a committed attitude towards sustaining ongoing improvement in the quality of care they provide children.

The manager supervises staff through appraisals, monitoring and regular meetings. Staff have a willing attitude towards training and undertake regular professional development. This helps to maintain their knowledge and skills. The staff team is strong and supportive of each other. They work well together as team and each knows their individual responsibilities. Staff from the other pre-school sites within the group, cover staff absence along with regular bank staff. This means that there are consistent staff who know the policies and procedures and expectations of the manager.

Records staff keep chart the good progress children make at the pre-school. The progress check at age two years for children, informs parents of children's progress and summaries give parents clear information about children's achievements. Staff work effectively with other professionals to make sure that all children progress well.

There is a positive partnership with parents. The pre-school is important to parents who are keen to discuss their approval of the care staff provide. Childminders who also care for children that attend the pre-school feel that they are included in children's care and able to share information readily. Two way communication is effective. The staff use various media to help parents to engage. There is a website where parents can read about what children are learning and share their own feedback. They feel that the pre-school is 'marvellous' and staff are friendly and willing to talk.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY287576
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	924323
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 8
Total number of places	48
Number of children on roll	42
Name of provider	Ducklings Limited
Date of previous inspection	24/10/2012
Telephone number	07963 604768

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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