

Puddleducks Day Nursery (Baldock) Ltd

Butterfield House, Hitchin Street, Baldock, Hertfordshire, SG7 6AE

Inspection date	02/09/2013
Previous inspection date	22/02/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	1
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Well qualified and knowledgeable staff have an excellent understanding of how young children learn. They place a sharp focus on helping children to acquire communication, language and literacy skills. As a consequence, children are enthusiastic learners and their progress is very good.
- The nursery is exceptionally well led and managed. Expectations are high and there is a strong commitment to provide the highest quality of provision for the benefit of the children.
- The thoughtfully planned garden and playrooms create highly enabling environments for all ages of children to promote independence and to stimulate and engage them in purposeful play. Children benefit greatly from a wide range of resources and equipment to support their learning and development.
- There are very strong partnerships with parents and others who are involved in the care and learning of the children, which ensures that children receive outstanding support and continuity in their learning and development.
- Children are very effectively safeguarded with staff supervising the children carefully. Highly comprehensive and rigorous risk assessments take place and staff ensure that entry to the nursery is carefully controlled with visitors signing in.

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 observed activities in the play rooms and the outdoor area.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager and deputy manager of the provision
- The inspector looked at planning, evidence of suitability of practitioners working in the setting, policies and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents.

Inspector

Linda Bird

Full Report

Information about the setting

Puddleducks Day Nursery Ltd is privately owned and managed. It registered in 1995 on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from a converted building in Baldock, Hertfordshire. It serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery employs eighteen child care staff of whom sixteen are qualified to level 3, one holds a level 2 qualification and the remaining member of staff is unqualified. The nursery opens Monday to Friday from 7.30am until 6.15pm for most of the year. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 104 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides early education for two- and three-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- continue to develop the excellent performance management and monitoring systems even further to ensure that the very high quality of teaching is monitored and information is used to shape practitioners' ongoing professional development.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are highly motivated and very eager to learn; they join in activities with enthusiasm and enjoy their time in the nursery. Staff provide interesting and fun activities that meet the needs of children. The educational programmes address the prime and specific areas of learning. Staff have high expectations of the children and an excellent knowledge and understanding of how to promote the learning of young children. The nursery is very well organised and staff ensure that children can access a broad range of toys, books and equipment; as a result, children are highly active and independent learners. This means that children are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

Staff are highly skilled in promoting children's skills in communication, language and literacy development. They place a very high priority on listening and talking to children to develop their speech and widen their vocabulary. The learning environment both indoors and outside is full of print. Each playroom has an attractive and welcoming book area with cushions and a carpet for the children to sit comfortably. In the baby rooms care is taken

to ensure that books are age appropriate and easily accessible to the children. The children enjoy being read to and develop an exceptional interest in and love of books. A number of the older children are starting to read as they leave the nursery to move onto school; they make exceptionally good progress in learning to read. Children enjoy drawing and mark making. As the children complete a piece of work the adult writes their name on their work and the older children learn to recognise and to write their name. Children find their drinking cups, initially by looking for their photograph and then by recognising their name. Every opportunity is taken to help children understand that print carries meaning and to develop early reading skills. As a consequence, children make exceptionally good progress in literacy.

The rich and stimulating outdoor provision is a strong feature of the setting. Outdoor provision is carefully planned to offer a wide range of activities, including playing on a slide, climbing, using ride on toys, looking at books and enjoying sand and water play. A special feature of the outdoor provision is the children's garden. The children plant seeds and vegetables and care for the flowers and vegetables that they grow. They are learning about plants and know that flowers need sunshine and water to grow. The children use the vegetables in their cooking and learn to weigh and count the potatoes. The nursery entered the local vegetable festival for 2013 and the children were awarded a certificate for best courgette. They were also selected to grow flowers for a national flower show and they planted seeds and created a fairy garden. The children are learning about planting and growth and have an excellent understanding of where food comes from. The benefits of outdoor play are fully exploited; consequently, the children's physical development is very well supported. The outdoor space is imaginatively organised and this stimulating environment effectively supports children to make very good progress in their learning.

The staff team employ a very range of strategies to engage parents in their children's learning. Open evenings are held, where parents meet with their child's key worker to discuss their children's progress. Parents read their children's learning journals and contribute information to this if they wish. A monthly newsletter provides information about the areas of learning that the children will be pursuing in the coming weeks. In this way the nursery very effectively engages with parents about their child's learning, both at home and in the nursery.

The regular observation of children at play enables staff to assess children's learning needs and to plan highly challenging and interesting activities. Staff constantly observe and listen to children, questioning them during activities in order to extend their learning and enhance their excellent understanding. Children are keen and interested learners who are making extremely good progress in working towards the early learning goals. Through the expert use of resources and skilled teaching, children are exceptionally well prepared for school.

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

Arrangements to help children settle into the nursery and build secure emotional attachments with their carers are highly effective. Parents and children make a number of visits to the nursery prior to starting. Parents have regular contact with their child's key worker and this helps to build extremely positive relationships between home and nursery, which then contributes to children's sense of security and well-being. Children behave exceptionally well, staff set clear boundaries and encourage the children to behave in a positive and respectful manner. Children are sensitively reminded to share toys, to take turns and to be kind to each other. The nursery places a very high priority on teaching the children to keep themselves safe. For example, children know what to do in the case of a fire drill and the pre-school children know they need to leave the building from the first floor fire escape. Consequently, children are helped to learn about safety very well and know what to do in the event of a fire.

Children are provided with very healthy snacks and a nutritious lunch. Menus are displayed for parents and the food is prepared on site by a cook. Each child has their own water container and this is available throughout the day, so the children do not get thirsty. The staff make meal times a social occasion by sitting with the children and encouraging conversation. The staff encourage healthy eating by promoting fruit and vegetables and helping the children to understand what is good for them. The nursery has highly robust systems and procedures in place to ensure good hygiene. For example, when staff are helping the children at snack and lunchtime they wear disposable plastic gloves to prevent the spread of germs. All children have a tooth brush and tooth paste to clean their teeth after eating. Children are encouraged to learn the importance of basic personal hygiene and to ensure that their hands are clean before eating and after using the toilet. This means the children are very successfully supported to develop self-help skills and a healthy lifestyle.

The staff attach a great deal of importance to the children being outside and enjoying and benefiting from the fresh air. The children have fun playing in the very well resourced and highly stimulating outdoor area. They also go on walks and trips and the opportunity to enjoy fresh air and to run and play promotes children's physical development extremely well. The staff know the children very well and spend time talking to and playing alongside them, consequently, they enjoy very close and caring relationships. This highly positive adult interaction helps to develop children's confidence and self-esteem. Children are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their learning because staff provide high quality support to prepare them for their transition to school. This includes regular liaison with and visits to the schools where the children transfer to.

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

The manager, her deputy and senior staff provide very clear and highly effective leadership. They are very enthusiastic and dedicated to further improving the nursery. They foster a very strong team approach and involve staff in decision making. The staff have widened their knowledge and experience by attending training courses. As a result, the staff team is motivated and enabled to offer very high quality provision for all children.

Extremely effective systems are in place for the recruitment and induction of staff, ensuring that staff with exceptional skills and experience are employed. The manager carries out an annual appraisal with each member of staff and supervision meetings are carried out every six months. As a consequence, staff morale is extremely high and individuals are supported to provide excellent learning experiences for all children. Consideration can be given to building on these excellent performance management methods to further enhance the very high quality of teaching and practitioners' ongoing professional development.

The nursery enjoys close and very effective working partnerships with parents. Parents spoken to at the time of the inspection, hold the provision in high regard. They appreciate the way in which the staff help children to settle happily and learn to mix and play with other children. Parents' highly active involvement is encouraged through email, newsletters and questionnaires, so they can convey their views and preferences. Very effective partnerships with parents make a strong contribution to meeting the needs of children. The nursery has an extremely good relationship with the schools that the children transfer to and with the local children's centre. There are also very strong partnerships with other professionals, including the local authority area special needs adviser. This highly effective close partnership working with other professionals ensures that children's needs are identified and that they are supported to make outstanding progress.

This nursery places the highest priority on ensuring children's welfare and safety. Staff are extremely proactive in ensuring children's safety is maintained and the children are carefully supervised both indoors and outside. Very rigorous systems are in place to assess risk and to ensure that the premises are safe and secure. Staff create an environment that is extremely safe and welcoming, where children feel secure and happy. The provision has an excellent range of policies and procedures in place to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The manager provides strong and highly effective leadership and she and her deputy manager have driven changes and improvements to the nursery since the last inspection in 2011. These improvements include the creation of a garden area for the children and the purchase of new equipment and toys. The manager and her senior staff monitor and review the provision and educational programmes highly effectively, while continually looking for ways to improve. The nursery evaluates the quality of its provision very well through a planned self-evaluation process. Feedback on the quality of provision is also sought from parents through the completion of questionnaires. Action plans are in place to address any areas requiring improvement and all staff contribute to the formulation of these. The drive for improvement and forward planning is a key strength of the leadership and management of this outstanding nursery where children make excellent progress in their learning.

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
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	146487
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	910397
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	78
Number of children on roll	104
Name of provider	Puddleducks Day Nursery (Baldock) Limited
Date of previous inspection	22/02/2011
Telephone number	01462 490955

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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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