

# Little Ducklings

Murdoch House, Hemingfield Road, Barnsley, S73 0LY

<b>Inspection date</b>	12/11/2013
Previous inspection date	20/09/2012

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	
	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 enjoy a variety of stimulating activities that capture their interests and spark their curiosity. As a result, they make good progress in their learning because activities motivate them.
- A strong focus on the development of communication and language skills means all children are making rapid progress, including children whose starting points are below those expected for their age.
- Routines in the rooms the older children use reflect those they will experience in school. As a result, they are well prepared when the time comes for them to move on.
- Assessment of the provision is accurate. Areas for improvement are identified and, as a result, clear action plans are in place to focus on areas of weakness.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Some practitioners do not always fully understand how continuous provision supports children's interests. As a result, children are not always able to follow their interests and preferences for learning because activities are discontinued before they reach their natural end.
- Partnerships with parents are not always highly effective in ensuring they are accessing the wealth of information available to them and this means, occasionally, some parents do not feel they are actively involved in their children's learning.

## 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 five playrooms and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager of the provision.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children, the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plan.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day and from information included in the nursery's own parent survey.

## Inspector

Nicola Dickinson

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Little Ducklings Nursery opened in 2012 and is privately owned. It operates from converted premises in Barnsley. The nursery serves the immediate locality and also the surrounding areas. The nursery opens five days a week from 7am until 6.30pm all year round except on bank holidays and for a week at Christmas. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Children are cared for in five rooms and have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 148 children in the early years age range. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language.

There are currently 30 staff working directly with the children, all of whom have an appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above. Three members of staff have a level 4 qualification, three members of staff have a level 5 qualification and two members of staff have a level 6 qualification. The nursery receives support from the local authority. It is registered on the Early Years Register and 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:

- continue to build on the systems for engaging parents to ensure all parents feel they are involved in the assessment of their children's progress and can actively contribute to the learning experiences their children enjoy
- develop further practitioners' understanding of continuous provision to ensure children can fully follow their interests and explore their ideas as they investigate the indoor and outdoor environments.

### Inspection judgements

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

The setting is a large, bright nursery where children have lots of space to explore and investigate. Overall, practitioners have a thorough knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and this means they can provide children with a wide range of purposeful and developmentally appropriate activities that reflect their interests. Children

explore well-planned topical themes, such as the changing seasons, by exploring the natural environment during nature walks. Learning for pre-school children is enhanced by a 'forest schools' experience where they enjoy a variety of outdoor activities in the local woods. Critical thinking skills are promoted by practitioners who use open-ended questioning to help children solve problems. For example, how do they carry a bucket that is too heavy because it is filled with mud?

Key persons are knowledgeable about where each child is in their development. This ensures children are provided with a variety of educational programmes that offer them challenge and enhance their learning experiences, because they reflect their preferences for learning. For example, babies enjoy a variety of sensory experiences using natural materials chosen from 'treasure baskets' and exploring the sounds and texture of shredded paper. Children enjoy lively music sessions with enthusiastic practitioners who help them to explore the sounds of musical instruments from around the world. This helps them to develop their understanding of different cultures and promotes their acquisition of communication and language skills. On occasions, practitioners do not give children enough time to fully explore activities and follow their interests and, as a result, their ideas are not shared in as much detail as they could be. For example, the music session ends abruptly and the instruments are put away because it is time for children to go outside to play.

The nursery works with the local authority early years consultant to ensure they are planning educational programmes that support children's continuing progress across the seven areas of learning. They also work with local schools to find out where gaps are in children's learning when they enter school. This means they can target educational programmes to ensure gaps in those areas are narrowing. For example, pre-school children develop early mathematics skills that support the learning they will experience in school because a focus on mathematics promotes their knowledge and understanding. Children's communication and language skills are promoted by practitioners through lively story times, everyday discussions and song and rhyme sessions. They use props, pictures and physical gestures effectively to support children's developing understanding of English. 'Choosing boards' help children who have difficulty communicating through spoken language, to make choices about activities and this allows them to follow their preferences for learning. The nursery works closely with the local children's centre, where they can access a range of outside agencies to implement early intervention strategies for children who enter the nursery below the expected targets for their age. For example, speech and language therapist work with key persons to promote children's communication skills. As a result, children who are not yet meeting the expected milestones for their age are making swift progress from their starting points.

The nursery works very hard to promote partnerships with parents. Practitioners work closely with them to find out about children's interests, next steps in learning and their starting points. Through daily discussions, parent evenings, 'play and stay sessions', and a newly established parent committee, information about children's learning is continually updated. This helps parents to understand how effective teaching supports their children to make good progress towards the early learning goals. Parents are encouraged to complete 'star moments' from home to share their children's achievements. By sharing information in this way practitioners reinforce the connections between children's learning

at home and the activities they enjoy in the nursery. One example is an activity exploring transport that includes a discussion about how children travel to nursery. Their learning is extended by a trip to the local library when they travel on a bus. Activities children have enjoyed is shared with parents and they are given ideas about how to promote their children's learning at home, such as sharing favourite stories. Daily discussions with key persons keep them informed about how their child is meeting the expected milestones for their age. In general, parents feel they are kept well informed about their children's progress. However, some parents are not accessing the information available to them because the nursery has not asked them about their preferred method of communication. As a result they do not feel they are kept up-to-date about their children's learning and do not, always, feel included in the life of the nursery.

The nursery has robust partnerships in place with the local primary schools and other early years professionals. Detailed tracking and assessments of children's progress ensure information shared about children's learning is accurate. The required progress checks at age two have been completed and shared with all relevant partners. This ensures children who might need early intervention are quickly identified and systems can be put in place to support them.

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

Children experience a good standard of care from affectionate and caring practitioners. They enjoy short settling-in sessions with their parents and this helps to smooth transition, providing some continuity in their care, when they enter the nursery. A robust key person system ensures children build secure relationships early in their care. A 'buddy system' is effectively implemented by practitioners and this makes certain children's emotional needs are well supported when their key person is not in the nursery. Key persons share information about children's care routines through a daily diary and every day discussions. The nursery works with parents to ensure they are meeting the individual needs of each child and this means as children's care routines change, practitioners can maintain their health and well-being.

Children in the nursery are well behaved. They are developing a thorough understanding of right and wrong because explanations given to them are simple and age-appropriate. The nursery works closely with parents to reinforce boundaries for children who demonstrate unwanted behaviour and this means children receive clear and consistent messages. Children's safety and protection is given high priority without limiting their independent investigations because practitioners ensure children are well supervised and kept safe. Staffing ratios are adhered to at all times and this ensures there are a suitable number of practitioners to ensure children's needs are met. Children are encouraged to risk assess for themselves. For example, they are taught to use small tools, such as scissors, and they use real tools in the building area during outdoor play. They learn how to keep themselves safe while out on trips because practitioners teach them to identify hazards and show them how to cross the road safely. Outside agencies, such as local police community support officers, visit the nursery to support children's understanding of their community and how to keep themselves safe. As a result, children are developing a

very good understanding of how to stay safe.

Children who are settled in the nursery demonstrate confidence and self-assurance. They freely access resources and are keen to share their learning experiences with visitors. For example, they chat about their visits to their new school and the friends who are moving on with them. The support children receive to get them ready for transition into school is very good. Nursery routines, such as setting tables and serving themselves at mealtimes, familiarise them with the routines they will experience in school. Key persons support children during visits to school and this means they have the reassurance of a familiar adult to help them prepare for the move. The nursery invites Early Years Foundation Stage teachers from local schools to visit the nursery and a small number of them do attend to meet the children and discuss their progress. As a result, children from the nursery are well prepared for the changes when the time comes for them to move on. The nursery offers care for older children during school holidays and this means they still enjoy some continuity in their care when they enter full-time school.

Children enjoy outdoor play and learning in all weathers. The large outdoor area offers them a wide variety of opportunities to explore. They develop their physical skills using ride on toys and small climbing equipment. Trips to the nearby forest enhance their learning experiences in a much larger natural environment. This means they develop physical skills, while learning how exercise supports their overall health and well-being. Children explore growth and change with support from the head gardener by monitoring the progress of fruit and vegetables they have planted. Children who attend the nursery live in a diverse cultural community and a number of them have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Every day conversations and activities, such as role play, help them to understand each other's differences and this is demonstrated through the strong peer relationships they have both with adults and each other. They develop their knowledge of equality and diversity through a wide range of activities. In response to a request from parents, pre-school children are learning to speak a second language and this enhances their knowledge that everyone is different. Activities, such as charity events, involve parents, and this helps them to promote their children's knowledge at home. Effective teaching is helping children to understand the needs of others and this supports them in preparing for the larger social environment of school.

Children learn about personal hygiene through everyday routines and, as a result, they are independent in attending to their own self-care needs when they move onto school. Practices are implemented to keep the environment clean, such as removing outdoor shoes in the baby room, thus, ensuring children's health and well-being is maintained. Children enjoy a very wide range of healthy meals and snacks prepared by the nursery cook. Alternative options, such as vegetarian meals, are offered and this helps children to make choices about the food they eat. Recipes are shared with parents and the staff promote current healthy lifestyle guidance by making information available to parents and carers. Discussions at meal times help children to understand how making healthy choices promotes their overall health and well-being.

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

## provision

The nursery management team demonstrate a high level of commitment to driving improvement and raising the standards of the nursery provision. They have prioritised the building of partnerships with parents and the newly established parent committee is proving to be a successful tool for engaging parents in the monitoring of the provision. The nursery works in partnership with the local authority through their 'quality improvement programme' and this ensures a robust monitoring process facilitates an accurate assessment of strengths and weaknesses. This means swift and effective action is taken to address any areas identified for improvement. For example, the nursery works in partnership with the local authority early years consultant to improve the opportunities for children to enjoy outdoor play. To ensure all users of the nursery are involved in driving forward improvements and making changes, the views of parents, children, and practitioners are sought when evaluating the provision.

The manager supports parents understanding of the nursery's practice by providing copies of the policies and procedures and, overall, they demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the service provided. Security is robust. Entry to the nursery is by a buzzer and visitors to the nursery are monitored by managers located in the office. Detailed records of visitors are maintained. A register of the children's attendance, including when they arrive and leave, is in place. Staff deployment is monitored to ensure ratios are maintained at all times and this means children are well supervised.

Recruitment procedures are robust, ensuring practitioners are suitable to work with children. Induction procedures are in place for new staff to help them develop their knowledge of the policies and procedures of the nursery and they demonstrate they fully understand their responsibilities for ensuring children are kept safe at all times. Practitioners have a detailed understanding of child protection issues and children's safety is given high priority. All practitioners have attended safeguarding training and senior practitioners have completed advanced safeguarding training, to develop their knowledge of how to keep children safe. Detailed risk assessments are in place and are reviewed regularly to ensure children are kept safe both on the premises and during trips. There are 29 members of staff who hold a current first aid certificate, which means that they can give suitable treatment if there is an accident to a child.

The management team has a thorough understanding of the learning and development requirements. Ongoing mentoring of staff ensures most weaknesses in teaching are identified. As a result, training programmes are targeted to tackle any underperformance, and improve the abilities of practitioners who are already skilled. For example, practitioners attend training to promote their knowledge of how outdoor play can be used to extend children's learning experiences. Performance management systems ensure planned educational programmes are closely monitored to make certain they offer children challenge and promote their continuing progress. As a result, all children are making strong progress from their starting points.

### **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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY442316
<b>Local authority</b>	Barnsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	940390
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	112
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	148
<b>Name of provider</b>	Little Ducklings Child Care Barnsley Limited
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20/09/2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01226 755 789

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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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