

Little Ducklings

Murdoch House, Hemingfield Road, Barnsley, S73 0LY

Inspection date	21/03/2014
Previous inspection date	12/11/2013

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

- Teaching is good because practitioners understand how children learn through play and provide a good range of adult-led and child-initiated play-based activities. Consequently, children are acquiring the necessary skills for their move on to school.
- Effective partnership working with parents means there is a continuity of learning between the nursery and home, which contributes to the good progress children make.
- Children's behaviour is good because practitioners use effective strategies, such as praise, to recognise their achievements, which further motivates them in their play and learning.
- The management team and practitioners have a good understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements, to help keep children safe.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Children are not always provided with opportunities to experiment with colour, to promote their early understanding of media and materials further.
- Occasionally, there are fewer opportunities for children to focus on meaningful print to help them to understand further what a word is and make connections in their learning.
- There is scope to provide further opportunities for children to extend their understanding of shape, space and measure.

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 outdoor learning environment.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke with the manager, children and practitioners at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector checked evidence of practitioners' suitability, training certificates, policies and procedures, risk assessments and the nursery's self-evaluation documents.
- The inspector spoke with parents and grandparents to gain their views on the quality of the provision.

Inspector

Jane Tucker

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Ducklings was registered in 2012 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in converted premises in the Wombwell area of Barnsley. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from five playrooms and there is an area available for outdoor play. The nursery employs 35 members of childcare staff. Of these, 33 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and level 3 or above, including two with early years degrees. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7am until 6.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 150 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children who speak English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- provide further opportunities for children to experiment with colour and talk about what happens when they mix things together, to promote their understanding of media and materials further
- enhance the environment so it is even richer in print and point out words in books to allow children to understand what a word is and make connections in their learning
- provide further opportunities for children to talk about shapes they see in the environment and how they are arranged and used in construction, to promote children's mathematical learning further.

Inspection judgements

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

Practitioners have a good understanding of how children learn through play and the quality of teaching is good. Children enjoy a broad and interesting range of child-initiated and adult-led play-based activities, which practitioners plan for their key children. As a result, children gain a good range of skills to support their future learning, for instance, when they move on to school. In addition, this ensures children are provided with experiences that they enjoy and that offer them a good degree of challenge, based on their individual needs and interests. Parents also update practitioners regularly about their children's interests at home. This helps to ensure that practitioners are planning

appropriately for children's ongoing development. Parents contribute to initial assessments of children's starting points on entry. This information, together with practitioners' observations, helps to form the baseline assessment to begin children's learning journey. Thereafter, children are regularly observed and practitioners identify their next steps in learning. Regular and comprehensive assessments of children's learning, including the progress check at age two, ensure children's development is tracked effectively. Consequently, assessments show that children are making good progress in relation to their starting points. Children who speak English as an additional language are supported well by practitioners who obtain support from parents and the local authority, to ensure they meet children's individual needs.

Children enthusiastically take part in activities because practitioners use good strategies to engage children and promote their learning. For example, children use language to describe sounds, as practitioners encourage them to tap and bang on the side of a plastic bin and drop resources from a height. Children develop their control and coordination skills as they dip cotton swabs into paint trays and make marks on paper. However, practitioners do not always build on opportunities to support children to notice change when colours are mixed together. Babies begin to develop good communication skills as they copy action songs which encourage them to raise their fingers to count. Babies also repeat words, such as 'duck' and 'quack', as practitioners use picture cards to encourage their early speaking skills. Children enjoy looking at books and concentrate as they listen to stories and answer questions about the things they see. However, practitioners do not always point out words in books or the environment to allow children to understand what a word is and make connections in their learning. Practitioners promote children's early mathematical skills, as they make 'balls' from clay and line them up side by side. Children think critically as they make predictions about the biggest and the smallest 'ball', promoting their early understanding of size. In addition, children show an interest in shape as they make houses with small building blocks. However, there are fewer opportunities for children to show an interest in shapes in the environment, to promote their learning further.

The nursery places a strong emphasis on working in partnership with parents. Through parents' evenings, newsletters and play and stay sessions, information about children's learning is continually shared with parents. In addition, parents also share their children's learning at home through verbal updates and the use of home to nursery diaries. Consequently, this shared approach to children's learning and development contributes to the good progress children make and demonstrates a continuity of learning between home and the nursery.

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

A well-established key person system, pre-starting visits and flexible settling-in sessions ensure children make a smooth transition between home and the nursery. In addition, information gathered on 'All about me' documents helps key persons to get to know their children and families well. Consequently, babies arriving for their first session at nursery show how they have already formed secure emotional attachments with their key person, as they confidently leave their parents. Care practices are good and children learn about

good hygiene routines, such as washing their hands before food. Sound nappy changing procedures are followed and practitioners ensure that efficient hygiene practices keep children safe and healthy. Furthermore, practitioners teach babies early aspects of self-care, as they wipe their hands and face following each nappy change. Play spaces are organised well and resources are stored at age-appropriate heights. This allows children to make independent choices, play with their friends and use their imagination.

Children's dietary needs are met through the provision of freshly prepared meals, and the dedicated chefs ensure they are well-balanced and culturally diverse. Practitioners are very aware of children with food allergies and robust processes are in place. For example, regular communication with the chef, practitioners and parents ensures a whole team approach in keeping children safe. Mealtimes are sociable occasions and practitioners use this time well to talk to children about the food they are eating. For example, older children name their favourite fruit and describe the fruit they are eating as juicy and healthy. In addition, children's independence in their everyday tasks is also promoted well at mealtimes. This is because practitioners encourage them to choose the colour of their plate, gather their own knives and forks and serve their own food. Food-tasting activities and discussions about healthy food choices promote children's health awareness. Furthermore, drink stations in all rooms encourage children to listen to their bodies and decide when they are thirsty. Consequently, children are learning about aspects of their health as they begin to recognise their personal needs and take independent action to meet them.

Practitioners are good role models in the nursery and work well as a team. Their interactions with children are purposeful and developmentally appropriate. Practitioners use praise to further recognise children's achievements, and this motivates them in their play and learning. As a result, children's behaviour is good. All children enjoy access to daily fresh air, and practitioners place as much value on the outdoor learning environment as inside. For example, children have space to run around and develop their physical skills using ride-on toys and small climbing equipment. Outings to the nearby forest enhance children's large and small muscle development in a much larger natural environment. In addition, children also learn to take sensible risks and keep themselves safe, as practitioners teach them to cross the road safely and identify potential hazards. Practitioners demonstrate how they take appropriate action to protect children and keep them safe during outdoor play. For instance, they complete daily outdoor registers, conduct regular head counts and count children in and out of the nursery. Children's transition between rooms and to other nurseries and school is managed well. For example, 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 also invites teachers from local schools to visit the nursery. and a small number of them do attend to meet the children and discuss their progress. This helps children to know what to expect and prepares them emotionally for their next stage in learning, which is usually starting school.

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

The management team and practitioners have a good understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The designated officers clearly understand the local safeguarding procedures and their accountability for liaison with Ofsted and local statutory agencies. Practitioners attend relevant safeguarding training and know how to identify and report any possible signs of abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity to protect children in their care. In addition, practitioners' knowledge and understanding is regularly tested in staff meetings and through the use of safeguarding questionnaires. Safeguarding policies and procedures are robust, implemented consistently and shared with practitioners on a regular basis. They include the procedure to be followed in the event of any concerns raised about a child in their care. In addition, they include the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a practitioner. Strict mobile phone and other media procedures ensure practitioners and parents know when and where they can use their phones, to protect children from their misuse. Children are supervised well during their play and practitioners are deployed effectively to ensure children's needs are met. The ratio and qualification requirements are maintained throughout the nursery, ensuring children's safety at all times. Accident records are suitably completed by staff, who know what to do in the event of minor accidents or incidents, first aid boxes are located in each room and all staff have attended first aid training, which helps keep children safe and well. Written risk assessments are conducted on areas used by children and reasonable steps are taken to minimise hazards. Robust recruitment procedures are in place to ensure all practitioners have the appropriate skills and knowledge to fulfill the requirements of their role. All practitioners are vetted and Disclosure and Barring Service checks are completed to help guarantee their suitability to work with children. Confidentiality of information is taken very seriously, and staff are aware of company policies and procedures to ensure children are further safeguarded.

The management team has a good overview of the nursery and demonstrates an efficient understanding of the learning and development requirements. The seven areas of learning are covered through day-to-day activities, which help to ensure that children are making good progress to the early learning goals. The management team leads on monitoring to ensure that planning and assessment are consistent and display an accurate understanding of children's abilities and progress. As a result, children with identified needs are supported well with appropriate intervention, to help make sure they reach their expected levels of development. Performance management systems, such as appraisals and supervisions, are very well established and provide ongoing support and coaching to all practitioners. Consequently, any weaknesses in teaching are quickly identified and an appropriate programme of professional development is implemented, to promote the interests of all children. Consequently, practitioners are constantly improving their already good quality of teaching and practice, to benefit children.

The management team demonstrates a high level of commitment to driving improvement and raising the standards of the nursery. For instance, they work collaboratively with the local authority to ensure a robust monitoring process promotes an accurate assessment of their strengths and weaknesses. In addition, they hold parent committee meetings to obtain parents' and grandparents' views on the quality of the nursery. Consequently, quick and effective action is taken to address any areas of concern and clear improvement plans are implemented to support children's achievements over time. Parents spoken to on the

day of the inspection feel that they are kept well informed of their children's progress. In addition, they talk about the positive impact the nursery has had on their children's development. The nursery liaises well with the local children's centre and schools, and information is shared about children's progress through transition documents. Consequently, these strong partnerships help to provide children with good consistency in their care and 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	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

Unique reference number	EY442316
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	959651
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	158
Number of children on roll	150
Name of provider	Little Ducklings Child Care Barnsley Limited
Date of previous inspection	12/11/2013
Telephone number	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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