

Muddy Puddles Day Nursery

Bingham Park Farm, Potten End Hill, Water End, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP1 3BN

Inspection date

30/05/2014

Previous inspection date

09/11/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

2

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 are happy as staff work closely with parents to ensure their individual needs are well-known. Transitions between rooms are well-managed so that children remain settled and secure.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented effectively and ensure children's safety and welfare is protected and promoted at all times.
- Continuous development of knowledge and skills is encouraged and supported. As a result, new ideas are implemented to enhance children's care and learning.
- Staff deployment is effective and the staff team work very well together. They exchange information about each child's needs well so that continuity of care and learning is provided.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to extend opportunities to enhance children's independence and self-care skills during lunch and snack times.
- Staff do not maximise use of the outdoor area to offer children the same wide range of experiences that they have indoors and they do not ensure children can freely move between the indoor and outdoor play areas. Therefore, there is scope to further enhance the quality of teaching to extend children's learning to the very optimum.

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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector spoke to children and staff. She observed and discussed activities in the playrooms and the outside play areas.
- The inspector looked at range of documentation, including evidence of children's learning, planning, observation and assessment.
- The inspector checked evidence of safeguarding practices, staff recruitment, ongoing professional development and self-evaluation processes.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with a senior member of staff.
- The inspector obtained parents views on collection of their children.

Inspector

Maura Pigram

Full report

Information about the setting

Muddy Puddles Day Nursery was registered in 2009 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It previously operated under the management of Monkey Puzzle Day Nursery. It is now privately owned. The nursery serves the local area. It operates from converted barns near Potten End village, close to Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. Babies are cared for on the first floor and older children on the ground floor. There are enclosed areas for outdoor play. The nursery employs 33 members of childcare staff. Of these, 20 hold appropriate early years qualification at level 3 or above. Five staff members have a qualification at level 2 and one of the owners has a NVQ Level 4 in Early Years. The nursery also employs an administrator, a cook and regular bank staff. The nursery receives support from the local authority. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 7.30am to 6.30pm for 51 weeks of the year. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 123 children attending, who are within the early years age range. The nursery receives funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- strengthen opportunities for children to be involved in the preparation and serving of food and drinks, so that their independence and confidence in their own abilities can be extended
- enhance the use of the outdoor area to provide more rich, varied and imaginative experiences that promote all areas of learning even further; link the indoor and outdoor area so that children can freely move between these areas.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are happy and motivated in the nursery. Staff know children well. They use their knowledge of children's interests to plan effectively for their future learning. Children's starting points, routines and interests are gathered on entry from parents through discussion and the comprehensive welcome pack. These are regularly reviewed as children move through the nursery, so that emerging needs can be met. Key staff make thorough observations and assessments of children. They identify the next steps in their learning and use this to plan purposeful activities. Consequently, children are making good progress in their learning and development given their starting points. Staff keep detailed assessment records and use the information to support children to make good progress

towards the early learning goals. They also complete the required progress check for children between the ages of two and three years to confirm all children reach their expected outcomes. Summaries of each child's progress are regularly shared with parents, so that they are aware of their children's development. Any additional support is quickly sought, as and when necessary, so that all children are helped to make good progress given their starting points. All children's progress files are easily available for parents to view and parents contributions to planning. This is carried out through the sharing of information, such as achievements obtained by children outside of the nursery. Staff then use this in their planning to help support children's progress even further.

Older children demonstrate that are developing good skills to aid their readiness for school. For example, they play happily together, they problem solve and share resources as they go along in their imaginative play of 'fixing a leak'. This means that they clearly demonstrate the characteristics of effective learners. Good quality teaching enables them to recall events and to clarify their thoughts and ideas. The use of open-ended questions means that children's language and understanding is extended and effectively promoted. They also particularly enjoy learning about the solar system. For example, they concentrate for a long period of time when they share related books. Discussions take place about the astronauts, food they eat and the clothes they have to wear. This activity supports children's curiosity about the world around them. The use of phonics further supports children's understanding of language and their early reading skills. Many children can recognise their own name and that of their friends. Pens, pencils and painting materials are easily available indoors, so that children can practise their emerging drawing and writing skills. A newly created display board shows older children's drawings and expressive artwork. This supports their personal, social and emotional development. Younger children's communication skills are well supported, for example, staff regularly sing songs and popular nursery rhymes. The sharing of books is also a popular activity. Children are encouraged to join in as they point to pictures and talk about what is happening in the story. This further supports children's language development and their interest in books. Babies are well cared for in a bright and welcoming environment. Staff make good use of natural resources, interactive toys and the sensory room to engage babies in active learning. For example, children enjoy safely exploring lights and containers filled with items of interest, such as coloured sand and water.

Staff ensure all children have the opportunity to play outdoors on a regular basis. For example, all children are taken on regular walks to the nearby woodland areas. Staff make the outings exciting and challenging by linking these to popular stories. As a result, children are interested and engaged in their learning. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported, so that they too can join in with activities. Older children enjoy practising skills, such as successfully using hoops. They ride bikes and cars with confidence and negotiate space well. In addition, they take part in group activities, such as ball games and fun French classes. This promotes children's physical development. However, the outdoor area is not fully used to support other areas of learning and children are not able to freely choose to play outdoors. Younger children are taken out in buggies. Their emerging language skills are well supported, for example, staff provide a running commentary and sing songs to support their communication development.

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

Children are settled and have warm bonds with staff who care for them. The nursery establishes positive and trusting relationships with parents and children from the start. A key-person system is well-embedded and information about children is effectively shared amongst staff. There is a flexible settling-in system in place. This enables children to become familiar with their surroundings, so that they become confident and happy to explore. Babies and toddlers smile broadly at adults when they speak to them. Older children confidently take part in discussions with staff members and freely ask questions during their day. This shows that children feel secure and have good attachments with those caring for them. Parents state that they are very happy with the care their children receive. They share information about their children's care routines, likes and dislikes. Staff mirror these and use interests, such as comforters to help children settle. This helps children make a smooth transition from their home to the nursery. Parents of the younger children have daily diaries that include details about how their child's care needs are met during the day, such as when they sleep or what they have eaten.

Staff sensitively manage children's moves from each room to ensure children remain happy, confident and settle well in their new environment. For example, key staff take children to visit the next room so they become familiar with their new room. Information about children's needs are shared and relevant documentation is exchanged. As a result, children's transitions are effective and well-organised to ensure good continuity of care. The nursery offers a varied range of resources and activities for children. These are carefully selected to meet their stage of development, individual needs and particular interests. Children are encouraged to behave well and clear boundaries contribute effectively to this. Praise is used effectively throughout children's day. As a result, they develop good levels of self-esteem. Any issues of unwanted behaviour are swiftly managed, so that children learn right from wrong. In addition, staff effectively use various strategies, such as reading relevant story books. As a result, young children learn how to treat each other with respect. This contributes effectively to preparing children for the next stage in their learning, such as mixing with others when they start school.

Children enjoy nutritionally balanced meals that are cooked on the premises. Staff know children's preferences and dietary needs. They work closely with parents and the cook to ensure any changing needs are well-known. Toddlers and babies are well supported to develop self-care skills, such as feeding themselves. Mealtimes are a sociable occasion, good manners and the correct use of knives and forks are encouraged. This supports skills for the future as children grow. However, there is scope to involve children more consistently in the preparation of meals and snacks, so that their independent skills are further developed. For example, children have limited opportunities to pour their own drinks, serve their own food or to prepare their own fruit. Children learn good hygiene practices through everyday routines, such as washing their hands before mealtimes. Their personal care needs are well supported and sensitively met. Children's understanding of safety is promoted during the routine of the day. For example, they learn to consider the needs of others when using ride-on toys outside. In addition, visitors from fire officers extend children's understanding of keeping themselves safe in a fun manner. Children are

able to take supervised risks in their play when they visit the nearby woodland.

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

The provider has a good understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and monitors children's learning well. The manager and staff understand their individual roles and responsibilities for safeguarding children. They are clear about the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about a child in their care. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed, staff are familiar with these and they attend regular training to ensure their safeguarding knowledge is up to date. Secure recruitment, vetting and induction procedures are in place. This ensures that those working with children are suitable to do so. Risk assessments of all areas used by children are carried out to ensure that children are safe. In addition, the use of security cameras and coded entry pads on doors contribute further to ensuring children are safe.

Monitoring of the nursery and the learning and development requirements is an ongoing process. Views of staff, parents' and children are included in the process and these are valued. Since the last inspection, the owners have taken over joint responsibility for the organisation of the nursery. They have a clear vision for the nursery and aim to provide the best possible care for children. They continually reflect on the services provided and include the monitoring of resources in the process. As a result, equipment and resources for children's use has increased. This has a positive impact on children's learning and development. The provider always ensures that there is a high ratio of staff on duty. This has an effective impact to children's care and learning. Appraisals and supervision meetings regularly take place. In addition, meetings are held with room leaders to discuss children's and staff's needs. This contributes to the effective monitoring of the education programmes and identifying areas to develop. Training needs are well supported, for example, some staff are on further training programmes to extend their knowledge in teaching and caring for children. In addition, regular training days are held so that ideas to support children's development are shared. As a result, new strategies to engage children in further exploration and experiences are implemented, for example, more natural materials have been introduced to babies. This has had a positive impact on their learning and development.

Partnerships with parents are good. A wide range of information is provided on the nurseries noticeboards. In addition, the website provides information about the activities provided and the operations of the nursery. This provides parents with a good range of information. Parents are positive about the care their children receive. They state that their children settled easily and enjoy coming to the nursery. Staff have developed links with other providers where children may attend, such as teachers from nearby schools. This supports partnership working. Staff work closely with parents, external health colleagues and other professionals to ensure individual learning and welfare needs are effectively met. This contributes to narrowing gaps in achievement for all children in readiness for school.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory 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	EY390728
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	859289
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	92
Number of children on roll	123
Name of provider	Muddy Puddles Childcare Ltd
Date of previous inspection	09/11/2009
Telephone number	01442 262521

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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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