

The Ducklings Day Nursery

115 Warrington Road, LEIGH, Lancashire, WN7 3XF

Inspection date	15/07/2014
Previous inspection date	10/02/2009

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		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

- Staff have a highly robust knowledge of child development. Every opportunity is used to develop children's communication and language skills to the full so children are confident and excellent communicators.
- Partnerships with parents and carers are superb. Very positive relationships are established from the start and information about children's learning at home is incorporated into planning. Consequently, this is perfectly matched to meet children's interests and needs.
- Assessment is accurate and meticulous. Stringent checks are carried out by the management team to ensure quality is high across the nursery. As a result, staff are up to date with children's progress and have an excellent understanding of how to extend children's learning.
- Key persons have an excellent knowledge of the children and help children to form extremely strong attachments and feel very secure in the nursery.
- High regard is given to safeguarding children. Regular checks, by leaders, on staff's knowledge and understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures by leaders, successfully promotes children's safety and well-being.
- Partnerships with schools and outside agencies are exemplary and have a significant impact on meeting the needs of children. Arrangements for settling children in school and within the nursery are very well organised and mean that children settle in quickly.
- Professional development and training opportunities for staff are excellent and ensure that they are exceedingly well-trained and confident to provide high quality provision.

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 children's activities in all playrooms and in the outdoor area.
- The inspector held discussions with the owner, the local authority officer, staff and talked to children throughout the inspection.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the owner.
The inspector looked at various documents, including a sample of policies and procedures, children's assessment records, evidence of the suitability of staff and recruitment procedures.
- The inspector took account of the views of five parents and views of children spoken to on the day of the inspection.

Inspector

Emily Wheeldon

Full report

Information about the setting

The Ducklings Day Nursery was registered in 2008 and is one of two provisions owned and managed by a private provider. It is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from a converted detached house in the Leigh area of Wigan. There is a fully enclosed and secure outdoor play area for the children. The nursery employs 19 members of childcare staff including the owner. Of these, 15 hold early years qualifications at level 3 or above and three at level 2. The owner has Qualified Teacher Status and Early Years Professional status. The nursery opens Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6pm all year round, except for one week over the Christmas holiday. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 136 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two- and three- and four-year-old children. It supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery also receives support from Wigan Sure Start.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- promote further the excellent problem-solving skills in unplanned activities to ensure children's outstanding thinking skills are consistently improved upon.

Inspection judgements

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

Highly dedicated and experienced staff have an excellent knowledge of the interests and needs of children. This is because they carry out robust observations on a regular basis and planning and assessments are then finely tuned to meet children's needs. Staff have established very close working relationships with parents and this partnership enables children to make the best possible progress in their learning. Parental contributions about their child's learning and interests at home are very successfully implemented in to planning. For example, one parent sent an email to say her son had a special interest in bees so staff adapted their planning accordingly. Lovely examples included children tasting honey, singing songs about bees, and learning how to write the letter b. High emphasis is put on having fun, learning through play, and building positive relationships with people. This is achieved by staff being exceptionally strong role models to children, for example, showing them how to communicate effectively. Excellent support is given to developing and extending children's communication and language skills from a very early age. Staff introduce vocabulary, such as shell to babies and then repeat the same word over and over again so babies can retain the word. Young toddlers are very confident communicators and do not hesitate to approach adults and tell them about events in their own lives. For example, toddlers attempt to describe what happened to their dummy that

morning and say, 'It's inside Billy. He's my doggy'. Staff are vigilant and very quick to notice any child who is falling behind in their language development. They make swift referrals to speech therapists and children then make rapid progress in their learning. Children who speak English as an additional language also make significant progress in their speaking skills. This is because staff regularly communicate with parents to find out key words in their home language. In addition, visual aids are used to support children's understanding and children have access to dual language texts.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children's interests are intrinsically linked to thoughtfully planned and unplanned learning experiences. These activities very successfully capture children's natural curiosity and challenge them to explore and discover things for themselves. For example, young babies marvel at the sensation they feel as a feather is brushed across their cheeks. They giggle with delight and maintain eye contact with one another, taking turns to swap feathers. Staff expertly observe this and intervene when appropriate. For example, they play a game of taking turns to tickle one another's cheek. Such highly positive experiences teach babies how to take turns and communicate with other people. Other excellent experiences to engage older children in problem solving are in place in focused tasks, however, are not consistently implemented into unplanned activities. Staff incorporate mathematical concepts extremely well, such as teaching toddlers about shapes by getting them to name and match different shapes on a picture. Staff say, 'Where do you think this shape might go?, What is this shape called?' Toddlers have excellent knowledge about shapes and can name an 'oval' along with a whole variety of other shapes. The skillful staff allow children the freedom to think of their own ideas and gently encourage them to work things out for themselves. For example, toddlers are highly engaged in their learning and independently go to find a square to draw around and attempt to cut out the shape. High quality interactions between staff and babies mean that babies receive excellent standards of care in their learning. Staff allow babies time and space to discover how objects work and they show delight at the sounds they hear when they press buttons on a machine.

Staff are very experienced and have a first rate understanding about enhancing children's literacy skills. They instinctively know when it is appropriate to intervene and when to allow pre-school children to try writing letters in their name by themselves. However, when children attempt to write a 'P' incorrectly, they gently remind them about how the letter is formed. This ensures children develop excellent handwriting habits from an early age so they are ready for school. Children are given a wealth of opportunities to develop their physical skills, both indoors and outdoors. Toddlers and pre-school children play with small and large construction toys and ride bikes while babies explore their environment by crawling or leaning on furniture. Meticulous assessments of children's learning ensure any gaps in learning are quickly identified and support is promptly put in place. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are extremely well supported because staff work very closely with parents and external professionals to ensure their individual needs are met.

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

Children are exceptionally well cared for by loving and friendly staff. They treat all children as unique individuals and give expert care and attention to meeting their care and learning needs. Highly successful systems to gather information about children's starting points with parents are in place. As a result, staff have an excellent picture of the children's abilities. Staff also speak to parents to ascertain children's interests and home routines so they can be mirrored in the nursery. There are well-planned systems to ensure new children settle from the beginning, when they move in to new rooms and start school. For example, key persons regularly speak to one another and share information relating to their key children. Visits from local schools are arranged in the nursery so teachers get to know the needs of the children. Transition review meetings for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are also extremely well organised. This results in parents, staff and outside agencies providing an excellent consistency of care and children adjust very well to their new environment in school. Staff are extremely vigilant and responsive to children's care needs. For example, when toddlers are having a go at using the potty, they are always there to ensure they are comfortable and in dry clothing. Staff keep a detailed log of wetting accidents young children experience during the day and keep a close eye to check whether anyone needs to go to the toilet. A very efficient log giving details about toileting as well as staff checking children are dry, ensures children's needs are met well. A key-person system is deeply embedded in practice and means that children feel extremely secure. Staff are always close by to ensure children are happy and confident. Consequently, babies and children thrive and enjoy exploring the highly stimulating activities on offer.

Relationships at all levels are exemplary, with spontaneous acts of kindness towards others being the norm. For example, toddlers and pre-school children voluntarily share out toy cars with friends and help one another to tidy toys away. This is because staff are very positive role models and they consistently praise and boost children's confidence. They deal with low-level disruptive behaviour quickly so challenging behaviour does not escalate. Children are extremely aware of boundaries and have an excellent knowledge of how to keep themselves safe. For example, pre-school children know they must always walk when carrying a pair of scissors and they must hold the sharp end. In their words, they say, 'so you don't cut anybody'. They fully understand the ground rules and know that some activities can get very busy so only children who are wearing a clip may play in that area. This means that children play exceptionally well together and the atmosphere remains calm which is very conducive to high quality play.

Hygiene procedures are excellent and children are served highly nutritious food and snacks so they are fit and healthy. A healthy eating policy is very effectively embedded and staff adhere to this very well. They are not afraid of sharing their values about healthy diets with parents. For example, staff encourage them to think of healthier food options in their child's lunch box. Weekly swimming sessions are organised by the nursery for pre-school children, therefore, very successfully enabling them to become confident swimmers. Lively dance sessions and free-flow access to a highly stimulating outdoor play area further enhances children's already excellent physical and coordination skills. There are also areas for quiet reflection time and relaxation. For example, children move freely between the indoor and outdoor area and enjoy settling on soft cushions in the book area. Babies are given superb opportunities to develop their self-help skills, such as feeding themselves pureed vegetables using a spoon. Toddlers enjoy handing out cups to their

friends, and pre-school children know how to put coats on by themselves.

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

Staff ensure the highest standards are maintained to safeguard children and they receive regular training to keep their knowledge up to date. Safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented well and are known and understood by all staff. For example, the manager regularly checks their understanding about the appropriate course of action to take in different safeguarding scenarios. Consequently, staff have an excellent knowledge about the signs and symptoms of abuse. Vetting, recruitment and induction procedures are rigorous and mean that all staff are suitable to work with children. An extensive range of policies and procedures are available to parents and are firmly embedded in practice. These are continually reviewed and discussed at staff meetings and are regularly updated. Accurately maintained records also ensure children's welfare is meticulously protected. For example, managers keep a close eye on ratios to check there are sufficient numbers of staff to care for the number of children present. High regard is given to recording accidents, incidents and administration of medicines and parents are kept well informed. Risk assessments are very thorough for all areas used by children and staff are always vigilant and supervise children at all times. As a result, all children are extremely well protected.

The nursery is unceasing in its desire and drive for improvement and leadership and management are of the highest quality. As the owner summarised, 'We will never stop improving. No one is perfect. A happy ship means happy children'. Staff listen to the views of parents, children, the local authority and other professionals and swiftly ensure changes are made to meet their needs. The nursery has met their previous recommendations from their last inspection very quickly. For example, the manager has reviewed planning and assessment procedures and activities are now very well matched to the needs and interests of all children. The manager has also increased the range of baby walkers and seating aids to support babies' physical development. New staff are closely monitored and there is a rigorous induction process to ensure that they quickly become familiar with the policies and procedures and understand their roles and responsibilities. The owner and her deputy manager are highly qualified and have a wealth of knowledge about early years education. They are rigorous in their duty to ensure all the educational programmes are covered in great depth and that the learning and development and safeguarding requirements are met. They also have an excellent knowledge of the skills of their staff because they regularly observe them working with children. The high quality professional supervision provided is consistent and the evaluations the management team make of staff's work are superb. This is because the targets they set are specific and very constructive so staff know what they need to improve the quality of their work. Staff are encouraged to share ideas with one another and carry out peer observations to critically reflect on their practice. This very effectively creates a happy, supportive atmosphere and ensures that everyone is maintaining high standards. An astute and targeted programme of professional development is provided to staff and is linked to their personal targets. As a result, staff are constantly improving their outstanding understanding and practice. An

excellent example of this is the highly successful language programme called 'Toddler Talk' which supports children with communication and language difficulties. Assessments show that children make rapid progress given their starting points. The management team has a impressive overview of children's needs because observation and assessment systems are highly effective in informing staff's planning. Cohort tracking sheets clearly highlight any gaps in learning and staff know exactly where to enhance the curriculum.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the nursery. Many comment on the warm, family atmosphere and say that staff are very friendly, professional and go the extra mile to meet the needs of parents and children. For example, parents say that they never feel rushed and staff are always there to listen and help. There are excellent procedures in place to ensure parents' concerns are dealt with in a professional manner. For example, the management team implement a complaints policy and follow up concerns by investigating them thoroughly. They then explain to parents what procedures they have put in place if required. The nursery welcomes and reaches out to parents as partners in education through parents' evenings, social events and informal meetings and discussions. Children's needs are exceptionally well met through outstanding partnerships with local schools and outside agencies. This is because information sharing about children's needs is first rate and support is put in place swiftly so children make rapid progress. Parents of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities say, for example, 'It is thanks to this nursery that our son has turned out to be a very happy and well-balanced boy in a mainstream school'. Other parents say that the care, guidance and support by staff is superb and has made significant improvements to their emotional well-being. Such highly positive comments show how caring the staff are and how well children and parents, particularly those in families experiencing difficulties, flourish.

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	EY370719
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	981629
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	74
Number of children on roll	136
Name of provider	Ducklings Day Nurseries Limited
Date of previous inspection	10/02/2009
Telephone number	01942 673297

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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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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