

Ducklings Opportunity Group

Meir Community Centre, Pickford Place, Meir, Stoke on Trent, ST3 7DY

Inspection date

25/09/2014

Previous inspection date

09/04/2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

1

Previous inspection:

4

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

- The quality of teaching is outstanding because all staff have an exceptional awareness of how young children learn and develop. They provide a wide variety of interesting activities to support all areas of children's learning. Consequently, children are extremely well prepared for the next stage in their learning, such as school.
- Staff have high expectations of children, which fosters a strong 'can do' attitude. Consequently, children make excellent progress in their learning, as they are encouraged to think for themselves, develop independence and make choices throughout the day.
- The caring and welcoming ethos of the group ensures that children quickly settle in and develop excellent relationships with staff and one another. Therefore, their emotional well-being is superbly promoted.
- Excellent safeguarding policies and procedures are well-known and implemented by the staff that place the utmost importance on ensuring children are extremely safe and secure at all times.
- Leadership is inspirational. Meticulous self-evaluation and reflective practice ensures that staff, parents and children are highly involved in the setting's continual improvement, in their pursuit of excellence.
- Children of all abilities are supported excellently by staff and through close cooperation with parents and outside professionals, such as speech therapists.

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 main playroom and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation of an outdoor, adult-led activity with the manager.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager of the provision and spoke with staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, and a selection of policies and procedures.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children, the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plans.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day and from information included in the setting's own parent survey.

Inspector

Sharon Lea

Full report

Information about the setting

Ducklings Opportunity Group was registered in 2009 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in the community centre premises in the Meir area of Stoke-on-Trent. It is managed by a committee. The group serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from one room and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The group employs six members of childcare staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications ranging from level 3 to 5. The group opens Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 9.30.am until 2.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 24 children attending who are in the early years age group. The group provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The group receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- consider ways to engage all parents in sharing their children's next steps in learning, such as including them in each child's daily diary.

Inspection judgements

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

The learning and development of children at the group is nurtured in a vibrant and interesting environment, where staff have very high expectations of themselves and the children. Staff have an exemplary understanding of how to meet the learning and development requirements. They plan a stimulating and imaginative curriculum, which covers every area of learning and gives children exceptional choice and independence. Children are given opportunities to choose additional activities or resources, which staff ensure are provided, valuing their views and opinions. As a result, children thoroughly enjoy their time spent with the enthusiastic and dedicated staff, who have the children's best interests at the heart of everything that they do. Children have lots of opportunities to engage in child-initiated play and staff expertly facilitate their ideas, extending their learning at all times. For example, when children are role playing at being hairdressers, staff ask them to book appointments. Staff include details, such as the day, time and type of treatment they would like. This promotes children's developing literacy skills, as they practise their writing, and reinforces their understanding that print has meaning. As a result, children are highly absorbed in their activities and make excellent progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff are excellent teachers. They continually engage children in conversation, expanding their vocabulary and consolidating new words by following interesting themes during activities. For example, during play, with small-world

resources, staff explain that the word 'pharmacy' on the building is an alternative word for chemist. Staff extend this to discuss the purpose of a visit to the pharmacy and how this connects to a prescription, which the doctor may give them for medicine to make them better when they are ill. The children are brought together for group times where they experience inspirational activities, such as 'what's in the box?' These opportunities promote children's thinking skills and develop their ability to follow instructions, as part of a group. Children are enthusiastic and animated in their approach to learning, which ensures that they are happy and confident.

Staff have an excellent ability to engage and enthusiastically interact with children, which results in them being highly motivated and eager to learn. Staff also teach children to develop excellent listening skills through playing games. For example, during group sessions, children are encouraged to listen carefully to instructions, such as 'shake your shaker slowly', 'shake your shaker faster' and 'stop'. Throughout such activities, children clearly show their enjoyment in trying new experiences and they beam with delight when they receive regular praise for their efforts and achievements. This builds upon their confidence and they successfully develop a 'can do' attitude. This prepares children extremely well for the next stage in their learning, such as school. Staffs' excellent approach to guiding children's play, without taking over, results in them developing high levels of creativity and maintaining focus on the activity for some time, for example, when using water and brushes outdoors to draw and to make marks. This is because staff model how the children can form shapes with the water, and encourage them to use their imaginations through asking, 'what colour are your butterfly's wings?' As with all activities, staff extend learning through discussing the number of sides a square has and what will happen to the water in the sunshine. When children decide to draw insects and are undecided about the number of legs a spider has, staff encourage them to guess how many. Staff then steer the children towards a picture of a spider, counting the legs together and identifying whose guess was correct or the closest. It is evident that mathematical understanding is promoted at all times, as children count together with staff, but can also be heard doing this independently in their play. As children talk, they build a wide vocabulary and learn to be confident in making decisions and expressing themselves. Language development is a particular strength as expert practice ensures children whose starting points are below those expected soon begin to make rapid progress. Children have exceptional opportunities to build their skills in literacy. For instance, children register themselves as they find their own names and put them onto the registration board. Staff provide large chalk boards outside to encourage children to make large pictures, using wide arm movements and stretching up. Indoors, there are continual opportunities for writing, drawing and spontaneous creativity, as resources are freely available to the children at all times.

Staff work closely with other professionals, such as educational psychologists and speech and language therapists. This ensures that individual targets for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified and fully addressed, in partnership with parents. Staff work closely with parents to gather information about children's interests and starting points. In the first few weeks of attendance, staff are very attentive to how children engage in play and their level of skill in all areas of learning. This means that the initial progress assessments that staff make are highly accurate portraits of the child as a whole person. Staff constantly observe the children. They use this information to update

their progress in their learning profiles and to identify next steps for planning. This ensures that children are making excellent progress in all areas of their learning, from their starting points, on entry to the group. Each day, staff share daily diaries and verbal information with parents about their child's day. Celebrations of children's individual achievements are shared with parents daily through the 'our achievements board', which parents are eager to read at collection times. Staff ensure that every child has a star displayed on the board; however, small their achievement may be. This reflects the positive outlook of the staff and their high aspirations for all children. Staff complete a comprehensive progress check for children between the ages of two and three years, for parents to share with health professionals. Staff meet with parents to discuss their children's progress and what the next steps in children's learning will be. However, there is scope to develop this excellent practise of sharing next steps further still, to ensure that all parents engage in this valuable process. Information about the group is shared with parents through notice boards and regular newsletters. There is also an extensive lending library for home sharing, which encourages parental involvement in children's learning. Staff provide information to support parent's understanding of how to promote early literacy and reading skills. This further enhances the excellent partnerships with parents, as they can confidently support their children's learning at home. Staff who act as key persons for the children moving on to school pay close attention to ensuring that children have the skills they need to make the transfer smooth. As children's independence and educational skills have been closely fostered throughout their time in the group, children are very much ready for the next stage in their learning.

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

Excellent relationships between the staff, children and parents are evident. Staff are exceptionally positive role models, which provides an optimistic atmosphere in the group, where children can achieve whatever they set out to do. As a result, children are exceedingly independent and resourceful. The key-person system is extremely effective and establishes firm links between the families and the staff. Parents comment that they have excellent relationships with all the staff. They feel reassured that the staff know their child very well, enhancing their sense of trust and security in the quality of their child's care. As a result, children have strong and secure attachments with the staff, highly promoting their emotional well-being. This enables them to enjoy their time and learn in a safe environment. Staff are extremely vigilant and notice any changes in each child's needs, immediately offering comfort and reassurance. Staff create a very inspiring and enabling learning environment. High-quality toys and equipment are in good order and easy to find. All areas of the premises are impeccably clean, safe and secure with staff attentive in promoting a safe environment. Children know that they need to hold onto the 'walking bus' when moving from indoors to the outdoor learning environment. They walk sensibly and know that before crossing the car park they must stop and look both ways with the staff before crossing. This supports their understanding of how to keep themselves safe exceedingly well.

Children quickly develop their independence in self-help skills, such as their toileting and hygiene needs. They take care and pride in their environment as they look after the toys and resources. Before snack time, staff and children sing the tidy away song, working

together until all of the resources are packed away. During snack time, staff organise the food, so children can easily reach and independently choose what to eat. All children wash their hands and follow the familiar routine in choosing what they want and sitting with their friends. Children pour their own drinks and take responsibility for buttering their own toast. Sometimes snacks include fruits, such as strawberries, which the children grow in the garden. Staff join in their conversations and encourage children to talk socially about their families and interests, developing their confidence in social situations. At lunch times, children have packed lunches from home. Staff provide parents with suggestions of healthy foods to include in these. This is supported through the group being part of the local authority 'eat better, start better' healthy eating scheme and the National Health Service 'promoting oral health' scheme. Staff discuss favourite foods with the children and how it is fine to sometimes eat foods they enjoy, such as chips, and also what will happen if they eat these too often. This helps to develop children's understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles.

Staff support children in being considerate of others' needs and thoughtful in their behaviour. For example, during block play when two children want to use the same resources, staff suggest that they could work together to build a house. Staff praise their teamwork, expressing their happiness about their positive attitudes and behaviour. This builds children's self-esteem and develops their ability to manage their own behaviour. Children thrive because of the positive praise the staff offer to support their confidence and emotional well-being. All children are polite and respectful, and staff appropriately remind them to use their manners when they forget. Children's physical health and development is promoted exceptionally well as staff provide them with excellent opportunities to experience fresh air and exercise in the wonderful outdoor play area. In addition, children participate in weekly physical fitness activities, provided by an external trainer, linking exercise to all areas of their learning. Staff at the group ensure that children are emotionally extremely well prepared when it is time for them to move onto school. Their smooth transitions to school are well supported due to the excellent relationships established between the staff and the local schools. Teachers are invited to visit the children in the group. Staff share information with them regarding the child's progress in all areas of learning and any areas which may require additional support.

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

The manager of the group provides strong effective leadership, through her excellent understanding of how to meet the learning, and safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years foundation Stage. Each staff member is confident and has a thorough understanding of the policies and procedures, which underpin the exceptional practice in the setting. Robust recruitment and suitability processes are in place to assess and continually appraise staff suitability. Robust risk assessments and rigorous daily safety checks undertaken inside and outside minimise hazards, in order to reduce the risk of accidents to children. Thorough procedures for dealing with accidents are stringently followed. All staff are trained in paediatric first aid and, therefore, are prepared to deal with any accidents or medical emergencies promptly and effectively. All staff have a thorough understanding of their role and responsibility in safeguarding and promoting

children's welfare. Staff receive continual refresher training, so they are fully familiar with the child protection procedures in the local area and are confident to follow these. Staff know what to do should they have concerns about the welfare of a child and demonstrate an exemplary understanding of other procedures, such as whistleblowing. Record keeping and documentation are highly organised and policies and procedures are regularly reviewed. This includes management monitoring accident reports, to ensure that there are no repeated concerns. All of these measures in place help to underpin children's safety and well-being extremely well.

The nursery employs highly qualified staff and all staff are further developing their skills through additional training as they work. This means that the manager and staff can regularly review their practice against new ideas. Staff appreciate the wide range of opportunities to develop their skills, whether by training and mentoring or through supervision and appraisal. Management regularly observe staff's practice, discussing this together and looking for ways to improve. The manager involves staff, parents and children in the self-evaluation process and is continually setting targets for improvement. For example, the group send out a regular questionnaire asking parents to grade the provision and provide suggestions for improvements. The manager and staff work together as a strong team, valuing one another's suggestions and taking new ideas on board. As a result, the provision is being continually enhanced for the benefit of children. At the last inspection by Ofsted, the nursery received several actions to improve. The management and staff have been highly proactive in addressing these actions. These include ensuring the security of the building, to prevent children being able to leave unsupervised, developing staff understanding of their roles and responsibilities and implementing regular staff supervision sessions. As a result, the children's welfare is now ensured. The manager has exemplary methods for monitoring and analysing the provision. She works closely with her team to review all the learning journals frequently and gathers data about children's progress. The manager makes regular cohort analyses to check the impact of their teaching. This gives her excellent evidence to address any areas where individual or groups of children may be underachieving and celebrates the high impact of staff teaching upon the excellent progress that children make from their starting points.

Parents clearly value the nursery very highly. They receive a wide range of information about their child's day and their achievements. Regular parents' meetings mean they are well informed about their child's development and newsletters keep them updated on any news about the group. Parents express high levels of satisfaction with the group, the staff and their children's noticeable progress since attending. The manager and staff have built excellent partnerships in the community. They work closely with the receiving schools to support children and their parents as they move on. The staff have an excellent understanding of how to work with other professionals to support children if any additional needs are identified. Overall, this means that children enjoy highly consistent care. The manager and staff work closely with the local authority advisors and swiftly address any recommendations they make. All staff are extremely committed and determined to maintain the already very high standards in this outstanding nursery.

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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	EY404277
Local authority	Stoke on Trent
Inspection number	977892
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	24
Name of provider	Ducklings Opportunity Group Committee
Date of previous inspection	09/04/2014
Telephone number	07817 175 228

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

