

Inspection of The Ducklings Day Nursery

45 Higher Road, Liverpool L25 0QG

Inspection date:

19 May 2022

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

The owner and staff plan an inspiring curriculum and environment with open-ended resources that children are eager to investigate. For example, babies discover that they can feel grains of rice and delight in pouring and scooping it. Staff are skilfully observant and notice what fascinates children to extend their learning further. For example, older children role play their understanding of what a construction site may be like. Staff then develop this into an activity where children follow their interests and build dens and bug houses and discuss their experiences. Younger children sort items by colour and use weighing scales. Children problem-solve as they try to balance wooden blocks on the scales. This helps children to build their self-esteem and self-confidence to very high levels.

Children thrive in a safe, warm and nurturing environment and their behaviour is excellent. They build excellent bonds with staff, who are kind, caring and have high expectations for them. Staff support children to develop an excellent understanding of rules and boundaries. Children show high levels of self-regulation and build strong relationships. For example, they share resources, have excellent manners and behave exceptionally well. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the dedicated manager and staff went out of their way to provide support to all families. They provided essential connection for families through using group video messages and bespoke activity boxes to support children's learning at home. All children are flourishing across all areas of learning and are making exceptional progress.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- A strongly designed curriculum is in place that helps to ensure that all children make superb progress. Children's experiences are rich in investigative play. The manager and staff have a shared vision for what they want children to learn and achieve. For example, outdoor provision is a strength of the nursery. Children have opportunities to have hands-on experiences and to develop their understanding of the natural world. For instance, older children can pond dip for tadpoles and compare their findings in a reference book. They can explore herbs and different-scented teas to create new and amazing mixtures. This results in children being highly engaged in what they are doing.
- Support for children's communication and language is extremely strong, such as through the fabulous conversations staff initiate. They ask children thought-provoking questions and encourage them to be inquisitive and problem solvers. They provide opportunities for children to develop their language. For example, children describe very clearly a recent visit to London and how this links to the upcoming celebration for the Queen's jubilee. Staff ensure that all children are included in group discussions and reflect on their learning to aid remembering.
- The manager closely monitors the high-quality care and learning opportunities

staff provide. Staff are incredibly well supported and prepared for their roles, and their well-being is prioritised. Training is expertly tailored to meet the needs of children and to have the highest effect on staff's practice with children.

Recently, the owner has encouraged staff to lead parts of training, for the rest of the staff. Staff speak passionately about the training they have undertaken and how they have used this to improve their practice. Staff report that this has helped to build on their confidence levels. Children flourish as a consequence.

- The nursery has exceptionally strong partnerships for sharing information with parents. Parents say that staff treat children as though they are 'part of their family' and that they go above and beyond for them. Staff communicate with parents in a range of ways, such as through parents' evenings, newsletters, video calls and daily diaries. They provide detailed information for parents to extend children's learning at home.
- Staff work consistently with parents to know babies' routines and ensure that they meet their individual needs highly effectively. Staff chat with children to promote healthy eating and talk to babies about what they are having for snack and other meals. Staff sit with the children in all rooms, providing quality adult support and social interaction as needed. All children develop an excellent awareness of healthy eating habits.
- Children's emotional well-being is exceptionally strong. Staff nurture the character of babies and children and support their sense of security superbly. Key persons provide highly flexible settling-in sessions and ensure consistency for children when they move to other rooms. All children build very strong attachments with their key person, which ensures that they feel secure and underpins their ability to learn exceedingly well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is highly effective. All staff contribute to a strong culture of safeguarding for all. Staff undertake a rigorous safeguarding induction. This includes extensive training and a review of the company's in-depth policies and procedures. Regular safeguarding training and ongoing reflection at staff meetings ensure that staff's knowledge and understanding are up to date. Staff are confident in identifying signs that may indicate a child is at risk of harm and they know who to speak to for advice. The manager implements robust and comprehensive recruitment procedures. These include stringent background checks and a thorough induction process to ensure that children are cared for by suitable adults.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY443238
Local authority	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Inspection number	10129220
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	61
Number of children on roll	90
Name of registered person	Ducklings Day Nurseries Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP527362
Telephone number	01514862144
Date of previous inspection	14 June 2016

Information about this early years setting

The Ducklings Day Nursery registered in 2012. The nursery employs 17 members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The manager holds a qualification at level 5, and the owner has early years professional status and qualified teacher status. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Suzy Marsh

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- The owner and manager accompanied the inspector on a learning walk of the setting. They discussed the curriculum they provide and how this is arranged with the inspector.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager, and they discussed the impact of teaching on children's learning.
- A number of parents spoke to the inspector and their views were taken account of.
- Relevant documentation was reviewed by the inspector, including the suitability of staff working at the nursery.
- The inspector held discussions with staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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