

Inspection of Little Ducklings

Murdoch House, Hemingfield Road, Barnsley S73 0LY

Inspection date: 5 December 2022

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Inadequate
Leadership and management	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Children's welfare is not maintained. Staff knowledge of indicators of child abuse is not secure. Robust procedures for the recruitment of staff have not been followed by management. This does not protect children's well-being. Despite these weaknesses, children feel settled and secure, as staff are kind and attentive to them. Babies are encouraged to make their own decisions as staff ask them which cereals they would like for breakfast. During singing time, babies take turns going over to the song board and choosing the image of the song they would like to sing. Staff are very respectful as they ask babies for permission before wiping their nose or taking them to change their nappy.

All children benefit from well-planned activities, which support their ongoing learning and development. Management have identified a clear range of skills and knowledge they wish for children to learn. Daily group time activities are planned throughout the nursery for all ages of children. These experiences are used to promote children's communication, listening and attention skills. Children's love of books and songs is successfully supported as staff introduce them to a book and song of the week. Babies and toddlers join in with the actions to the popular rhymes and repeat simple words. Pre-school children enjoy singing along to rhymes. They also begin to recall and discuss familiar parts of stories, which are re-read by staff.

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

- Management has not ensured safer recruitment procedures are fully followed. While procedures are in place to check staffs understanding of child protection, these have been found to be ineffective. This does not protect children's welfare.
- Parents express how staff have supported their children's development. They confirm how their children's communication skills have improved and how staff have encouraged them with potty training. Parents of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities confirm that their children receive effective support, which enables them to make progress.
- Babies are supported to develop their physical skills as they learn to crawl and then use the furniture to stand. As babies develop their walking skills, staff provide challenge as they help them to learn to safely negotiate steps.
- Staff plan further activities during outside play to extend pre-school children's control, balance and coordination. Children learn to balance over small obstacle courses. They learn to negotiate space as they ride the ride-on toys along a pretend road created by staff.
- All children benefit from activities, such as planned forest school sessions. As children grow and develop, they learn to take calculated risks in a safe environment. Older children are supported to learn about nature and the life

cycle of living things. Staff focus on supporting babies' and toddler's exploration of the world using their senses. They also introduce them to new language as they discuss the things they see.

- Staff sit with babies at meal and snack times. They encourage younger children to feed themselves. They also promote their good social interaction, as they sit and talk to them. However, staff working with toddlers and pre-school children do not consistently sit and talk to children while they are eating. While children are supervised, staff do not use this time effectively to support children's good social interactions.
- Staff plan activities around the chosen book of the week, broadening children's experiences. For example, children develop their creativity, making houses for 'The Three Little Pigs'. They enjoy making towers and a bean stalk for 'Jack and the giant'. Staff introduce them to mathematical language when discussing how big or small the bean stalk is.
- Management use additional funding to support individual children's learning needs effectively. Staff monitor children's progress and speak to parents when concerns are identified about their development. Staff provide these children with more focused support and seek further external agency guidance, if required. This ensures children receive the support they need to close gaps in their learning.
- Management explain how independence, including children learning to serve their own meals, is a key skill they want children to develop. However, there are some inconsistencies with how staff promote this. For example, staff often provide older children with plates, cutlery and cups and serve meals and drinks for them. However, when children access a drink during the day, they are encouraged to pour this for themselves. While children have the necessary skills to achieve these tasks, they are not provided with consistent opportunities to further develop their abilities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Children are not protected well enough, as staff knowledge of possible indicators of abuse is not secure. For example, all staff do not understand how to identify if a child is being drawn into holding extreme views or behaviours. They are also unfamiliar with the signs associated with female genital mutilation. The manager demonstrates a clear awareness of these potential signs. In contrast, all staff are aware of the indicators of abuse associated with physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect. The manager understands safe recruitment procedures, which should be followed to ensure the suitability of staff. However, these have not been followed. While staff have Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks in place, additional checks have not been obtained for all new staff. This does not protect children's welfare.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
ensure staff have a clear understanding of child protection procedures, including developing knowledge of a wide range of indicators of abuse, with specific regard to understanding how to recognise extremist views, behaviours and radicalisation, and female genital mutilation	05/01/2023
ensure procedures to assess the suitability of staff are effective, with specific regard to implementing safer recruitment practices.	05/01/2023

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

- improve support for children to develop their social interaction skills
- clarify how children will develop their independence and share this approach so that all staff implement it consistently.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY442316
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10262371
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 8
Total number of places	100
Number of children on roll	122
Name of registered person	Little Ducklings Child Care Barnsley Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP902514
Telephone number	01226 755 789
Date of previous inspection	19 February 2018

Information about this early years setting

Little Ducklings registered in 2012 and is in Wombwell, Barnsley. The nursery employs 21 members of childcare staff. Of these, 17 hold appropriate early years qualification at level 3, one at level 5, two at level 6 and one holds qualified teacher status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Melanie Arnold

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider 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 provider.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The manager and deputy manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- Children spoke to/communicated with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector carried out three joint observations of planned activities with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery with the inspector.

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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