

Inspection of Ducklings Preschool Limited

Meeting Place, 45 Springfield Boulevard, Milton Keynes MK6 3JH

Inspection date: 22 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Overall, children are happy and settled to come to this pre-school. Children who find it difficult to separate from parents are offered cuddles and reassurance from staff.

Children enjoy their time together at pre-school and show joy when they are greeting each other and the staff during morning registration. Children begin to learn about themselves and enjoy finding their own name and photos as part of self-registration during morning group time.

There is a variety of activities and resources planned and ready for children as they arrive. However, staff do not have clear intentions for the activities provided. Children do not consistently benefit from meaningful play and learning. They often move from one activity to another quickly and do not build on what they already know and can do on to their next steps in learning.

Children are generally polite and respectful to their peers and staff. However, they do not show the same respect for the toys and equipment. Staff do not consistently support children's engagement with toys and activities. As such, children lose interest quickly. Children often drop or tip toys on to the floor and step over them.

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

- The manager has high ambitions for all children. However, because she completes so many roles within the pre-school, she does not have the capacity to ensure that all staff share the same goals for children.
- Staff are well supported, and the manager offers guidance of where she would like staff to be and what she would like staff to do during the pre-school sessions. However, staff do not receive regular supervision. As such, they are not adequately supported and guided to develop the skills and confidence necessary to carry out their responsibilities independently.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. Staff are aware of their needs and offer one-to-one support so they can engage in activities they enjoy. For example, children show a particular interest in singing the alphabet and recognising letters in their names. Where further or external support is needed, the pre-school's special educational needs coordinator works closely in partnership with other professionals. She shares relevant information with the nursery staff team.
- Staff plan activities that look inviting and fun for the children. However, staff do not consistently reflect on their knowledge of the interests and learning needs of the children. They do not engage the children in the learning and development of new skills effectively.

- Parents are happy and feel well supported. They receive feedback each day, and information about their children's progress is shared through the online portal. Flexible settling-in arrangements allow children and parents time to get to know what happens at pre-school. Parents comment on the care and education their children receive. They speak positively about the friendly staff team and feel that their children have made progress.
- While staff get down to the children's level, they do not always plan, deliver, or adapt adult-led activities effectively. Children are not consistently provided with suitable age-appropriate challenges, and, at times, they become distracted and lose interest.
- Staff build positive relationships with the children. They warmly welcome the children in pre-school, offering cuddles and reassurance. Staff talk about children's emotions and what they can do to help them feel better.
- Staff help children to develop healthy lifestyle habits. Children enjoy nutritious snacks. They have opportunity for physical exercise and fresh air. Children learn to be independent. For example, they practise using cutlery to prepare their own snacks.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures. They can identify potential risks for children. They can demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of signs and indicators of abuse. Staff know how to document and record concerns effectively. Staff have a good understanding of how to make referrals and escalate these to appropriate safeguarding partner agencies. They are clear on the setting's whistle-blowing policy and know how to raise concerns should they have any about the conduct of colleagues.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
provide staff with the skills and confidence they need to carry out their responsibilities without the constant supervision of the manager	17/04/2023
devise and implement an ambitious and exciting curriculum that supports children's learning and development in all areas.	17/04/2023

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY486119
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10280369
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	32
Name of registered person	Ducklings Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP910109
Telephone number	07519849762
Date of previous inspection	11 September 2017

Information about this early years setting

Ducklings Preschool Limited registered in 2015 and operates from a community centre building. The setting is open Monday to Friday, from 9.15am until 2.30pm, during term time only. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years, and it is in receipt of early years pupil premium funding. The pre-school employs five staff, four of whom hold relevant qualifications.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lisa Robinson

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.
- The manager and inspector discussed the learning intent for the pre-school.
- The inspector spoke with staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with a sample of parents and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed staff interaction with the children, inside and outside, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The manager and inspector held a meeting. The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including evidence of staff qualifications and suitability.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, 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 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023