

Inspection of Puddleducks Day Nursery (Baldock) Limited

Butterfield House, Hitchin Street, Baldock, Hertfordshire SG7 6AE

Inspection date:

16 November 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

Children form close bonds with the staff, who are kind and caring and show a genuine interest in the children. They recognise children's individual care needs and soothe them when they are unsure. As a result, children are happy and settled. The dedicated and ambitious leadership team has a clear understanding of what they want all children to learn and how to achieve this. However, the curriculum is not fully embedded. Staff's knowledge of the planned curriculum and their interactions with the children, are variable across the nursery. They plan inviting experiences for children, but do not always consider how they can implement this for the age and ability of the children. Consequently, children do not stay at the activity for long and some do not learn as much as they could.

Children enjoy opportunities to play outdoors. They gain confidence in their physical abilities as they ride scooters, make up chasing games and build obstacle courses. Staff hold younger children's hands as they try to master the garden steps. They help children experiment with filling and emptying containers as they build sandcastles in the sand tray. Children play alongside their friends and smile as staff praise them.

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

- Leaders have an accurate understanding of their strengths and areas they wish to develop. They know what good-quality care and education looks like. Leaders are working with the staff team to ensure the teaching is consistent throughout the nursery.
- Staff sing songs, read stories and talk to babies and young children. Older children enjoy finding the different letter sounds for their names. During some activities, staff provide too few opportunities for children to hear high-quality back-and-forth interactions. For example, younger children make prints with paint using pine cones and conkers. However, staff offer very little language to support the activity. Leaders say they will introduce staff to the recent training they have attended. They plan to help staff focus more precisely on their interactions and language.
- There are many opportunities for children to develop their independence. Children help themselves to snack and use forks and spoons at mealtimes. Children understand the importance of good hygiene practices. However, some routines and transitions of the day are not always planned as well or supported by staff. Therefore, at times, staff become rushed and disorganised, and children are not able to make the most of the potential learning opportunities. For example, staff do not support and sequence the learning for children who are toilet training because they are also changing other children's nappies.
- Staff support children's personal, social and emotional development well. They

take time to develop strong and trusting relationships with babies and young children, providing reassurance, comfort and cuddles when needed. Children generally behave well when they enjoy taking part in activities that interest them. Staff adapt children's settling-in procedures to help meet their individual needs. Furthermore, staff support children during their transition from room to room. They make sure they share key information between the staff in the rooms to help meet children's needs.

- Children develop their mathematical thinking. For example, they use counting blocks to build towers and look at the different sizes and shapes of blocks and count them.
- Parents are happy with the care that their children receive. They comment that they know their child is happy and safe as the staff are so caring. Parents say that they develop positive relationships with leaders and their children's key persons. They receive regular updates.
- Staff say they are happy in their work. They express that the leadership team supports their well-being. New staff value the induction, training and ongoing mentoring they receive. Staff value the team meetings.
- Staff work with the nursery's special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator to discuss any developmental concerns. Children with identified delays have appropriate plans in place. Staff share these with parents and other professionals in a timely manner. This ensures that children receive the support they need.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The leadership team and staff fully understand their role and responsibility to keep children safe. Staff have a good understanding of procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child's welfare. Leaders follow the correct procedure if there are allegations made against staff. The environment is risk assessed throughout the day and the premises are safe and secure. The leadership team follows clear recruitment procedures. They make checks on new and existing staff to ensure that they are, and remain, suitable to work with children. Risk assessments are effective and staff take appropriate steps to minimise hazards to children.

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
--	-----------------

improve and embed the implementation of the curriculum, including staff's interactions with the children, to ensure all children receive consistently meaningful learning experiences that build on what they already know and can do.	31/01/2024
--	------------

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

- extend staff's knowledge on supporting and extending children's language development
- review the organisation of routines to better support children's individual needs and learning outcomes.

Setting details

Unique reference number	146487
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10313380
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	1 to 4
Total number of places	100
Number of children on roll	110
Name of registered person	Puddleducks Day Nursery (Baldock) Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP908965
Telephone number	01462 490955
Date of previous inspection	26 June 2018

Information about this early years setting

Puddleducks Day Nursery (Baldock) Limited registered in 1995. The nursery employs 22 members of childcare staff. Of these, 14 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 8am until 6pm, all year round. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lisa Topham

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 joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual and the manager about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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