

Inspection of Ducklings Pre-School Ltd

Brookfield School, Brook Lane, Sarisbury Green, SOUTHAMPTON SO31 7DU

Inspection date: 10 July 2024

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

Children thrive at this homely setting, run by a wonderful staff team that knows the children so well. Staff are continually communicating with their colleagues about the children and instinctively give each other support, which makes the day run smoothly. Children are provided with interesting and exciting learning opportunities that ignite their fascination of the world around them. They make frequent trips out of the setting, for example, to the library and to the local woods. Children also go on regular visits to a local care home for the elderly, which helps them develop respect for others and gain a greater understanding of their place in society. The setting also subscribes to a children's newspaper, so that children can learn about what is happening around the world. They learn about earthquakes and develop new vocabulary as staff teach them about tectonic plates.

Staff offer lots of praise for children's achievements, which helps children to feel a great sense of pride. Children are very well behaved. They offer to help their peers during activities and look out carefully for the younger children. The manager and staff are highly attuned to the needs of all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They work closely with parents and other professionals to devise targeted strategies and ensure children receive ongoing support.

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

- Children benefit from a long-standing staff team that is always looking for ways to improve. Staff research different teaching concepts and incorporate these into their curriculum. For example, they have introduced 'loose-parts' play to boost children's imaginative skills. Forest school training has enabled staff to provide regular forest school sessions, where children can deepen their learning about the natural world. This is also promoted as the pre-school has its own allotment, where children help to plant and grow cabbages, tomatoes and pumpkins.
- It is clear that the staff know the children very well. Each child is recognised as a unique individual, and staff have a natural ability to use their interactions to build on children's learning exceptionally well. Children are strongly encouraged to do things for themselves. For example, they have easy access to materials to make their own play dough whenever they wish. If children encounter problems, such as their flour and water mixture being too sticky, staff encourage children to think about the solution for themselves.
- Staff want the very best for all children. Where children need more support, staff work exceptionally well with parents and other professionals to create individual learning plans to close any emerging gaps in children's learning. Staff support children to have a smooth transition to school when the time comes. They help children to research their new schools, for example, by looking at virtual tours

online.

- Children enjoy healthy meals that meet their individual dietary requirements. Children understand the importance of washing their hands and explain that, 'Germs are on your hands but you can't see them, they're so tiny. If you wash your hands, you wash them off.' Older children use cutlery competently and all children are encouraged to scrape their plates when they are finished, helping to take responsibility for their environment.
- Children are extremely confident to engage visitors in their play. They show great imagination as they pretend to be doctors and use the mud kitchen to make medicine for their patients. Toddlers develop their senses as they splash in the water tray and use their fingers to move paint around on the easel. Older children join in enthusiastically during group activities. Staff show children how to clap out the number of syllables in their names, which enables them to identify the separate sounds and enriches their understanding of language.
- The manager and staff have developed excellent partnerships with parents. They share lots of information about children's progress through daily discussions, newsletters and via an online app. The parent committee meets regularly with the staff team to discuss fundraising and identify areas for development. This helps to drive continuous improvement at the pre-school. Parents are extremely happy with the quality of care and education their children receive. They comment on the value that staff place on literacy and communication, as well as outdoor play. Parents greatly appreciate the support from staff and extra touches, such as making photo books for children of their pre-school friends when they are unwell. There is a genuine affection for every family who attend.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY425494
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10354231
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	1 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	32
Name of registered person	Ducklings Pre-School Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP903549
Telephone number	07733 830304
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2018

Information about this early years setting

Ducklings Pre-School Ltd first registered in 2007 and re-registered as a limited company in 2010. It operates from a lodge in the grounds of Brookfield Community School, in the Sarisbury Green area of Southampton, Hampshire. The pre-school is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm, for 48 weeks of the year. There are four staff working with the children, two of whom hold early years teacher status and two are qualified to level 3. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Nicky Hill

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school 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.
- A member of staff who holds early years teacher status joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about the curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector spoke to children to find out about their time at the setting.
- Staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual/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.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The nominated individual/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.

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