

Inspection of Little Ducklings

Murdoch House, Hemingfield Road, Barnsley S73 0LY

Inspection date: 12 September 2024

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

There is a lack of oversight and support from the provider to improve the quality of education for all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Action taken to tackle some areas of identified weakness at the last inspection have been insufficient. Although managers have a curriculum plan that sets out what they intend children to learn, this is not implemented consistently across the nursery. Staff that work across different rooms do not know the children well enough that they engage with. This means that they do not extend or challenge children's learning because they do not know what children need to learn next. Additionally, staff do not fully understand how to enhance children's interests as they happen. For example, staff do not consider how they can implement the curriculum intent for mathematics for toddlers as they engage in water play. Children do not consistently benefit from purposeful learning opportunities.

Children arrive happy at nursery and enter the rooms with a positive attitude to learning. However, this is not sustained throughout the day due to poor deployment of staff and organisation of routines. Pre-school staff do not give clear expectations of behaviour to children, particularly at mealtimes. Managers talk of developing children's social and emotional skills for their move on to school. However, pre-school staff do not always promote this aspect of learning well. Despite this, children do form positive relationship with their peers.

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

- The provider does not oversee the performance of leaders. Weaknesses have not been addressed in a timely way. This impacts directly on all children and the quality of education that they receive. Leaders do undertake supervisions of staff's practice. However, these are not effective to tackle the poor implementation of the curriculum or quality of education. The use of walkie-talkies between leaders and the rooms is effective, as are procedures for counting children in and out of rooms and the building.
- Staff plan some adult-led activities based on children's interests and stories they read, such as 'Room on the Broom'. However, staff do not plan and prepare well enough for these activities. For example, they do not consider what they want pre-school children to learn from mixing different ingredients. Staff do not respond to children's emerging interests as they happen. For example, when pre-school children ask 'What colours mixed together make orange?' staff do not pursue this further to encourage new experiences and learning.
- Staff do not consistently organise routines well. Pre-school children sit at the table for a significant period before food arrives and this impacts on their behaviour. They bang cutlery on the table, turn their plates upside down and

place knives on their face close to their eyes. This goes unnoticed by staff. Children with SEND wander the room eating food, which creates a risk of choking. Babies become bored and restless as they wait for their peers to finish handwashing routines. Some babies fall onto their bottom from low rise chairs, which upsets them. Staff do not consider purposeful learning opportunities during times of transition.

- Babies repeat words spoken by staff, such as 'water on' as they wash their hands. They put their paper towel in the bin, showing their early independence. However, when babies drink from each other's cups, staff do not replace or clean the lids. Instead, staff pass the cups to the correct children for them to drink from. Children's health is not consistently supported.
- The poor deployment of staff in the pre-school room impacts greatly on the story time that follows lunch. Staff do not consider that some children do not want to sit again after lunch. The environment is chaotic and staff shout to be heard as they try to read a story. Staff do eventually seek support from those who undertake cleaning duties as their patience frays. Once the group is split, pre-school children do settle to listen to the rhyming words in the story. They learn words such as 'ferocious' and their meaning.
- The support in place for children with SEND is inconsistent. Designated leaders and key persons work with other professionals to create individual learning plans. However, handovers between key persons and other staff, especially at mealtimes, are not effective. Children with SEND do not always receive the support they need at this time. This leads to their distressed behaviour. Furthermore, leaders do not share concerns about children's development with parents as they identify them. This means children who may require additional support do not get the help they need promptly enough.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
consider the individual needs, interests, and development of each child and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences for each child in all areas of learning and development	11/12/2024

implement regular and effective arrangements for the supervision of all staff, including leaders, to provide opportunities for support and coaching to promote the interests of children	11/12/2024
ensure children are appropriately supervised, particularly when eating	11/10/2024
ensure staff have a suitable understanding of how best to deploy themselves, particularly where changes to routines take place, to consistently meet the needs of all children	11/10/2024
support staff to promote children's good behaviour and how to give clear explanations to support their developing social skills and what is expected of them	11/10/2024
improve hygiene practices to ensure children's health is consistently supported	11/10/2024
ensure an effective key-person system is in place and support staff who work across different rooms so that they develop a deep understanding of how they can meet children's individual learning needs	11/10/2024
ensure children with SEND are supported, especially at mealtimes, so that their individual needs are met and share concerns with parents or children who may need additional support.	11/10/2024

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY442316
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10313675
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 9
Total number of places	86
Number of children on roll	71
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	20 September 2023

Information about this early years setting

Little Ducklings registered in 2012 and is in Wombwell, Barnsley. The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, 13 hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 2 and 3, one at level 5 and one at level 6. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7am to 6pm. The nursery offers the government funded places for childcare and receives specific funding for disadvantaged children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jane Tucker

Inspection activities

- The manager, deputy manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children spoke to the inspector at the inspection.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity with the manager.
- The inspector observed staff practice and held discussions with staff members about the work that they do and their ongoing professional development.

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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