

Inspection of The Duckling Nursery

Writtle Infant School, Writtle CM1 3HZ

Inspection date: 3 December 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

The provider has a clear vision of what she wants children to learn and achieve and has high expectations for all children. There is a well thought out key-person system in place. This ensures that staff know the children and families well and can plan appropriate next steps for children. Staff provide a varied curriculum that follows children's interests and developmental needs. Staff engage with children during their play and adapt their approach to meet the needs of all children. Children can make choices about where they play and what they engage in throughout the day.

Staff are effective in engaging with other professionals when required. They communicate with other settings and professionals involved with families to ensure continuity of care and learning. Funding is well used to provide additional opportunities for children to make progress. This ensures that all children, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children in receipt of additional funding, make good progress from their starting points.

Staff treat the children with kindness and respect and are good role models. They encourage and praise children throughout the day. As a result, children are kind, considerate and polite to one another. For instance, they move to make room, so their friends can join them for story time.

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

- There have been clear improvements since the last inspection. The provider has worked hard to implement the changes required. For example, all staff are now aware of the procedure to follow when there are child protection concerns. In addition, large-group times have been reviewed to enhance the children's learning opportunities. The whole team is motivated and continues to reflect on the service it provides to ensure the best possible outcomes for children.
- Children are becoming confident communicators. They enjoy stories and songs and enthusiastically join in with action rhymes. Staff read stories with enthusiasm, and children confidently fill in the gaps that staff purposefully leave. Older children competently retell stories to visitors. Staff use stories to introduce concepts, such as stranger danger, to children.
- Children demonstrate high levels of concentration in their chosen activities and are engaged at all times. Staff interact with children during their play. They teach them new skills, such as how to use scissors. They provide information and use explanations to develop children's understanding of basic concepts, such as hard and soft. However, staff do not always identify times in their interactions when they could extend children's learning further. This means that children are not consistently provided with high levels of challenge.

- Children have constant access to the outdoor space where there are plenty of opportunities to develop their physical skills. Children are extremely competent in using the balance bikes and can manoeuvre around obstacles with ease. They practise balancing on the climbing frame with staff, suggesting they use their arms to help them balance. Staff have identified that children need more space to develop these skills further. As a result, they have started to use the school playground, so children can continue making progress in their physical development.
- Staff support children in developing their independence with self-care skills. They encourage the children to find and put on their coats when going outside and to return them to their hooks when coming back indoors. The children also learn to put on and take off their shoes. All children help tidy up before mealtimes. Children independently wash their hands before mealtimes. However, children are not encouraged to wash their hands after blowing their noses, and staff do not model this behaviour when assisting the children. This does not promote positive attitudes towards hygiene practices.
- Parents speak highly of the setting. They report that their children have made good progress in their development since starting and are happy to attend. Staff offer effective support and guidance to parents. For example, they support families with potty training. Parents feel that any issues they raise are dealt with quickly and efficiently. Parents are invited into the setting to take part in themed days.

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

- strengthen the quality of staff's interactions with children to help them consistently challenge and extend children's learning as they play and during planned activities
- encourage staff to implement appropriate hygiene procedures in relation to handwashing after nose wiping.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY535765
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10364600
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 11
Total number of places	28
Number of children on roll	102
Name of registered person	The Duckling Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP535764
Telephone number	07359754682
Date of previous inspection	27 June 2024

Information about this early years setting

The Duckling Nursery registered in 2016 and is run by a limited company. The nursery employs nine members of childcare staff. Of whom, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, during school term times. Sessions are from 7.30am to 5.30pm, Monday to Thursday, and from 7.30am to 12.45pm on Fridays. This includes a breakfast- and after-school club. The nursery provides funded early education for eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lyndsey Barwick

Inspection activities

- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the setting and discussed the early years foundation stage curriculum.
- Children communicated with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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 carried out joint observations of a group activity with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Staff spoke to the inspector about how they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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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