

# Inspection of Little Ducklings

Murdoch House, Hemingfield Road, Barnsley S73 0LY

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Inspection date: 14 January 2025

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Inadequate</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Inadequate</b>
Personal development	<b>Inadequate</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is inadequate**

Leaders do not have the capacity to improve the quality of education and care for all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and children who speak English as an additional language. Weaknesses identified at the last inspection remain. Some children wander aimlessly and do not engage in purposeful play, particularly when their key person is absent or working in another room. Staff who are left to work with these children do not know what they need to learn next. This poor deployment of staff impacts significantly on children's learning, indoors and outdoors. As a result, these children spend long periods of time not engaged in any learning.

Children are eager to play outdoors with their peers. However, staff do not enhance children's interests and learning as it happens. For instance, children peer through the fence to see the dustbin lorry. However, staff do not engage to help extend their learning further. Pre-school children show their imagination skills. For instance, they explain how they are 'having a slice of pizza' while playing in the snow outdoors. However, staff do not extend this learning further. They reply with closed questions and comments. For example, staff respond simply with the comment 'are you'. There is a curriculum plan that sets out what staff and leaders want children to learn. However, leaders do not ensure this is embedded consistently across the nursery to help children achieve the best possible educational outcomes.

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

- Leaders are aware of weaknesses in the setting. However, they do not respond quickly to put matters right. Leaders undertake staff supervision. However, this does not foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement for children. Consequently, the quality of education and care for all children is inadequate.
- Leaders and staff often place toddlers and pre-school children in the same room. However, they do not consider all children's individual needs, developmental differences and size disparities as part of this decision process. Toddlers who have recently moved from the baby room struggle with this social challenge. They wander back and forth and do not engage in any purposeful play. Where staff do interact with toddlers, this is reactive to what toddlers do. For example, staff talk about food when toddlers pull food pictures off the wall. Staff do not consider children's individual needs.
- The key-person system is not effective. It does not consistently support children's individual needs. Staff do not know how to support children when their key person is absent or working in another room. Some staff are not always clear on who their key children are. Children do not consistently receive high-

quality interactions from staff. This is because they do not know children well enough and what they need to learn next.

- There is no clear leadership in any of the rooms. The poor deployment of staff and ineffective planning of routines impact greatly on children's learning. Staff are unaware of children who play behind the shed outdoors. Although these children do not come to harm and the outdoor area is secure, this demonstrates poor supervision of children. Staff only realise children's location when they carry out a headcount as children go indoors.
- Additionally, transition from outdoor to indoor play is ineffective. Staff attempt to engage children in a circle time activity in the pre-school room. However, they do not consider the different development stages in the group. Some children immediately disengage from the learning. When more children join the group, this leads to a chaotic environment. Staff stop the play and send children to wash their hands ready for lunch. However, there is no further interaction for those waiting to do this task. Staff do not consider age-appropriate learning for all children during times of transition.
- Staff are unaware that some toddlers have not eaten snack until the point of tidying away food. Appropriate cups with lids are not available in the pre-school room for toddlers to have a drink independently. Staff do not always ensure that toddlers and pre-school children wash their hands before eating or after they wipe their nose. Toddlers and pre-school children sit at the table waiting for their lunch for a long period of time after washing their hands. Staff try to engage children in song. However, noise levels rise, and learning is lost.
- Mealtime in the baby room is a positive experience. Babies' health and hygiene are better supported. Babies wash their hands before they eat, and staff engage effectively with them. Staff name the food babies eat and narrate what is happening. They sing songs with babies and count as they place crayons into containers. This goes some way to enhancing babies' early language and mathematical skills.

## 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?

**The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take enforcement action.**

**We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:**

	<b>Due date</b>
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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	28/01/2025
improve hygiene practice for toddlers and older children to ensure children's health is consistently supported	28/01/2025
ensure children with SEND are supported so that their individual needs are met	28/01/2025
ensure meaningful engagement takes place with staff at all levels so that any issues are identified and addressed quickly to benefit children.	28/01/2025

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

	<b>Due date</b>
ensure the curriculum is effectively implemented, indoors and outdoors, for all children so that they are appropriately engaged and challenged in their learning	14/03/2025
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	14/03/2025
ensure a consistent key-person system is in place and support staff to know which children they are caring for and how they can meet children's individual learning needs when the key person is absent.	14/03/2025

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY442316
<b>Local authority</b>	Barnsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10378652
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	0 to 9
<b>Total number of places</b>	86
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	71
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Little Ducklings Child Care Barnsley Limited
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP902514
<b>Telephone number</b>	01226 755 789
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 September 2024

## Information about this early years setting

Little Ducklings registered in 2012 and is located in Wombwell, Barnsley. The nursery employs 12 members of childcare staff. Of these, 10 hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 2 and 3, one at level 5 and one at level 6. The nursery opens 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

### Inspectors

Jane Tucker  
Miriam Caldecott

## Inspection activities

- The manager, deputy manager and inspectors completed a learning walk together and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspectors spoke to children during the inspection.
- The inspectors observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and deputy manager carried out joint observations with the inspectors.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspectors.
- The inspectors looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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