



Little Ducklings Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY340681
Inspection date	18 January 2007
Inspector	Claudia Padfield
Setting Address	Campbell Road, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire, RG5 3NA
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Registered person	Bright New Minds Limited
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Ducklings Day Nursery was originally registered in 1995 and taken over by its present owners Bright New Minds Limited in 2006. The nursery operates from its own premises adjacent to Southlake Infant and Primary School in Woodley, Reading. The nursery serves the local community. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are 65 children on roll. The setting receives funding for three and four year olds and supports children with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language. The nursery opens Mondays to Fridays from 08:00 until 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. Over half of the staff team have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. Some staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy good opportunities to develop their physical play, staff ensure they have daily access to fresh air; they pedal and steer trikes with skill in and out of small spaces in the garden. Staff plan a interesting range of small equipment such as balls and hoops which they throw and catch with confidence.

Children are growing in awareness about health and hygiene issues, however staff do not fully encourage independence due to the constraints of the building and some staff lack consistent role modelling not wiping noses and washing hands and faces before snack time. However older children within the setting have easy access to the bathroom and independently wash their hands as required. Staff have a good understanding of new medication and accident documentation the setting have implemented and this is completed and signed by parents to ensure good levels of communication.

Children are well nourished and enjoy healthy and nutritionally balanced snacks, which are freshly prepared and successfully contribute to their well-being, healthy growth and development. Staff actively seek information regarding children's health and dietary needs, and any cultural preferences. These individual requirements are respected and followed to safeguard children and accommodate their needs. Menus are produced and shared with parents to keep them well informed about meal choices. However some children lack opportunities to be independent when serving food and drinks and they lack the opportunity to access drinking water freely.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure and welcoming environment. Security measures include a secure entry system and high handles on nursery doors. Children have free access to a varied range of toys and equipment that are of good quality. These are organised effectively to ensure children can independently and safely self-select from low-level storage while being well supervised. The outdoor space requires attention to ensure the children are protected; for example the play bark is currently missing.

Staff remind children how to keep themselves safe and use clear explanation to help them understand the possible consequences of their actions. For example, children are reminded to sit on chairs properly in case they fall off and they are encouraged to walk inside the nursery. Children also learn about fire safety through practising regular fire drills with staff. This raises their awareness and encourages them to share some responsibility for their own well-being.

Staff have a good understanding of how to safeguard children to protect their welfare. Most staff hold a first aid qualification and a secure understanding is held of their roles and responsibilities in line with local authority child protection procedures. These measures contribute

to keeping children safe and mean that staff can act appropriately and in the child's best interests.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the setting confidently and quickly settle into the familiar routine. Independence is successfully promoted and children use their initiative and select their own resources and play experiences. This is being successfully fostered throughout the nursery. Children participate with interest and enthusiasm, clearly excited and motivated to learn. Staff discuss and involve the children in the planning and development of activities demonstrated by the making of pancakes in the home corner. Children use their imagination and senses as they mix and stir the pancake batter with relish scooping it in and out of the jug and into the frying pan.

Staff know their key children well and spend time engaging them within their group rooms. The new observations capture the essence of the activities and each child's development, these are supported by photographs which make the achievements real. Staff make good use of the Birth to three matters framework using this to ensure that the children have a varied range of activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of nursery education is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals because staff plan and assess the children from daily observations. The staff are developing a knowledge of the Foundation Stage which they apply to the observations and future planning. However further knowledge of the Foundation Stage will enable the staff to accurately record the stepping stones within their planning. The staff have developed a good balance of adult and child-initiated activities. The planning of the theme or learning is based on a book or story the children have chosen. The children have developed good speaking and listening skills. For example; once the pancake activity had finished many of the children worked together with a member of staff cooperating and clearing up. All singing a song 'team work that's going on' 'team work that's going on'

Children have many opportunities to develop skills and confidence when using a range of small tools. They have access to a range of materials such as scissors, glue sticks and all types of paper; this enables them to be freely creative. These creations are fully valued by the staff team who praise and discuss with interest what the children have done. Children are confident in their interactions and they talk with enthusiasm about what they are doing and what they are going to do. This is developing high levels of self esteem. Some of the activities need to plan different challenges for the children who participate to ensure that they are suitably challenged and sustain the groups interest.

Children love books and stories they have many opportunities to look at books and discuss through the group time robot. Which they use as a communication tool. They understand that this is their time to talk and listen with interest. Children confidently join in with stories and anticipate what happens next. Children are learning that books can be used as a reference, spending time looking and discussing the different foods in the recipe books.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff promote an inclusive provision, all children are positively welcomed and their individual needs catered for. Children with learning difficulties are well supported through good partnerships with parents, individual care plans and good staffing arrangements are designed to meet the individual needs of the children. Children benefit from activities and resources which help them to value diversity. They learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through planned activities and accessing resources, which reflect diversity, disability and acknowledge cultural differences.

Children's behaviour is good in response to the staff's positive and consistent approach to behaviour management. Although occasionally gaps in the routine lead behaviour to deteriorate. Staff regularly praise children and take time to acknowledge good behaviour. Consistent boundaries are set and staff support younger children in sharing and turn taking and encourage older children to take responsibility for their own behaviour. For example, children are learning to negotiate and resolve their own disputes by encouraging one another to share resources. As a result, children have a good understanding of right and wrong and show care for their environment, the resources and one another. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents are welcomed into the nursery by an informative entrance area, with information displayed about the staff and the provision itself. Information regarding the service is contained within a parent handbook. Regular newsletters keep them up to date with the latest developments at the provision and daily sheets, verbal feedback and twice yearly parents' evenings keeps them well informed of the progress their child is making. Planning is displayed within each room and parents have easy access to their child's individual file, which they can discuss with their child's key person.

These successful partnerships with parents contribute significantly to children's development and promote continuity of care. Staff actively seek parents' views about their children's needs and interests before they start and on a regular basis throughout their time in the setting. Staff value the thoughts and wishes of the parents and this two-way sharing of information and expertise allows staff to continually meet the children's ever-changing needs and keeps both parties well informed. Children clearly benefit from this successful partnership and settle well in response which enhances their experience and makes it a positive one.

The partnership with parents and carers in relation to nursery education is good. Children's assessment files are shared with parents and parents' evenings give them the opportunity for fuller discussion about their child's progress. Parents are provided with information about the Foundation Stage and are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning. The setting has implemented a very child centred method of recording through the children's observations. These records are attractively presented and observations are supported by photographs of the children completing the required task. Staff plan for each child from what they can do and provide a range of interesting anecdotes which makes the learning more real.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff develop a welcoming and stimulating environment which encourages the children to participate in the activities. Good organisation skills, policies, procedures and children's records promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution to the setting. All regulatory documentation is in place. Staff are aware of their roles and duties and their deployment and organisation of the routine and room contributes significantly to the children's enjoyment and fun. Staff maintain ratios, supervise the children at all times and ensure they are never left unattended with persons not vetted. This safeguards the children's welfare.

Leadership and management are good. They support and actively encourage staff to train. Staff have embraced the new method of observing and planning the children's learning. This has been consistently applied throughout the nursery relating to Birth to Three and the Foundation Stage stepping stones. The manager/owners carry out regular self-assessments of the provision and work towards addressing highlighted areas to improve, ensuring the standards in others areas are maintained. Record keeping systems are used well to meet children's individual needs and to inform future planning. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure staff consistently promote hand washing and minimise cross infection through sound procedures
- develop meal and snack times to enhance independence and self regulation for the children, and ensure free access to drinking water throughout the day
- develop and assess the garden space to ensure it is safe and stimulating for all ages of children attending

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- increase the staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage
- ensure planning identifies the Stepping Stones within the Foundation Stage
- ensure activities are sufficiently challenging and based on each child's individual abilities and minimize gaps in the routine to ensure children stay focussed.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk