

Puddleducks Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	220145
Inspection date	12 December 2007
Inspector	Ann Austen
Setting Address	Blackymore Community Centre, Butts Croft Close, East Hunsbury, Northamptonshire, NN4 0WP
Telephone number	01604 763993
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Registered person	Sharon Eileen Collins
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?

Puddleducks Day Nursery is one of two nurseries run by a private provider. It opened in 1997 and operates from Blackymore Community Centre in the East Hunsbury area of Northampton. A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open four days a week during the school term only. Sessions are from 09:15 to 14:30 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and from 12:00 to 14:30 on a Monday. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 21 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 16 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the surrounding area. The nursery is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs five members of staff. Three members of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well-planned daily routines which focus on independence skills and keeping children healthy. For example, children readily wash their hands after using the toilet, after messy play, before snack and before baking activities. This sustains levels of hygiene and helps to prevent the spread of infection. Older children are developing a good awareness of how and when we wash our hands and why it is important to do so, in order to prevent the spread of germs. Effective policies and procedures fully protect children's health and ensure consistent attention to children's well-being. For example, most members of staff have up-to-date first aid knowledge and clear procedures are in place in the event of accidents, for the administration of medication and if children are unwell.

Children enjoy physical exercise which contributes to their good health and supports their continual growth and development. They thoroughly enjoy participating in the 'sports day' activities. For example, children enthusiastically run, jump in the animal sacks and climb through the hoops. Children are developing the confidence to use their bodies in a variety of ways. For example, they dance and wave colourful ribbons to music and think of different ways to move along the balance beam. Children enjoy regular exercise in the fresh air. They put on their outdoor clothing and jump up and down outside to keep warm on a frosty day, and splash in the puddles on a rainy day. Children enjoy activities which develop their hand-to-eye coordination and manual dexterity. For example, children use tools and cutters during baking activities, handle a range of construction resources and enthusiastically manipulate dough.

Children's individual dietary needs are acknowledged and met because staff take account of the wishes of parents and discuss their children's dietary requirements with them. Although children have their lunches provided by their parents, staff ensure that children learn about healthy eating and encourage the children to eat healthy snacks. For example, children enjoy fruit, raw vegetables, toast and cheese and biscuits. This promotes children's healthy growth and development. Children are enjoy trying new foods and help to prepare their own snack, for example, they make and cut sandwiches into different shapes. They enjoy their snack and staff make this a sociable and relaxed time. Children know that they can take on fluids as a way to maintain their health and have access to water from a water dispenser.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in secure, welcoming environment. However, the temperature of the rooms is not always maintained at an appropriate temperature. This compromises children's welfare. Children use a range of safe, good quality and developmentally appropriate toys, furniture and equipment which support their play and development. However, children do not always have sufficient opportunities to select further resources and play materials to fully promote their learning and development. Staff check the resources to ensure that they are safe and suitable for the children's individual needs.

Risks of accidental injury are minimised during indoor and outdoor activities because staff are effectively deployed and supervise the children well. As a result children are able to move around safely and independently. Security of the building is given high priority and there are

clearly defined procedures for the emergency evacuation of the building in the event of a fire. Staff help children gain an awareness of keeping themselves safe within the nursery and on outings. For example, staff explain how to handle tools such as the scissors and stapler safely and discuss the importance of behaving sensibly on outings. Children's welfare is safeguarded because most members of staff have a good knowledge of local child protection procedures and understand their responsibilities for the children in their care. However, some staff members are less secure and are not aware of the possible signs and symptoms of children at risk. This compromises children's welfare. A written child protection policy and clear procedures in place, including the Government booklet and local child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the setting. They are keen to learn and eager to participate in the activities provided which actively promote their emotional, physical, social and intellectual development. Children gain confidence through regular routines and develop close relationships with the friendly staff. As the children play staff take time to listen to and talk to the children. This encourages the children to think and promotes their language development. Staff implement the 'Birth to three matters' framework to promote the development of younger children. Children enjoy creative art activities, for example, they decorate party hats, make models out of recycled materials, create collage pictures and paint colourful pictures. They eagerly participate in baking activities, for example, children enjoy making and tasting jam tarts and biscuits. Children concentrate and persevere as they make puzzles and attempt to write their name. This actively promotes children's intellectual development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Most staff have a good knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. As a result children are making good progress towards the early learning goals and spend their time purposely. A good balance of adult-directed and child-initiated activities is maintained and a clear daily routine is followed. Staff plan an interesting range of activities which cover the six areas of learning and ensure that children are given time to explore the activities at their own pace. Learning intentions are clearly identified and staff plan specific focussed activities for the children. Activities are evaluated to determine how they can be improved, if necessary, and to inform future planning. Staff form good relationships with the children, responding and listening to their needs and ideas with interest. They monitor children's achievements and progress or identify possible gaps in their learning towards the early learning goals. The special educational needs coordinator is continuing to develop her knowledge of the 'Special Educational Needs Code of Practice', however, in some aspects she is less secure. Behaviour is well managed, staff help children to understand what is expected of them, to develop self-discipline and consideration for others. Generally effective use is made of the accommodation and resources. However, children have insufficient opportunities to select further resources for themselves, to enable them to initiate their own play and ideas.

Children are friendly interested and motivated to learn. They are learning to sit quietly during group time, to listen to staff and follow instructions. Children form good relationships with their peers, seeking out others to share experiences, for example, as they build the train track. They are polite and considerate towards others. Children confidently perform the nativity story to their parents, they bow to the audience and are very proud of themselves. Older children are learning to persist and concentrate during activities. For example, they persevere as they

write their names, colour pictures and make puzzles. Children are successfully developing their independence as they put on their coats for outdoor play, wash their hands after messy play and pour drinks from the water dispenser. However, they do not always have sufficient opportunities to select further resources for themselves, to enable them to initiate their own play and ideas. Children communicate with growing confidence. They engage in conversations with the staff and their peers and use language to describe what they are doing, for example, as they build models using the construction resources and make models out of the dough. Children are beginning to recognise that print carries meaning. They practise writing and make marks as they play, for example, children use pencils and paper in the writing station, write shopping lists and letters to Father Christmas. Older children are beginning to form recognisable letters as they write their names. Children play games such as 'lotto' to begin to distinguish one sound from another. However, this is not always sufficiently reinforced by all staff throughout the session. Children listen to stories and look at books for enjoyment.

Children participate in planned activities that encourage matching, sorting, size, shape and problem solving. For example, children count the number of girls and boys at registration time, weigh ingredients to make biscuits and develop their understanding of calculation as they sing songs and rhymes such as 'Five mince pies in a bakers shop'. Children confidently count to 10 and older children are beginning to count beyond ten. They enjoy exploring the world around them. Children move logs and stones to create a nature area in the garden. They plant bulbs to observe growth, search for mini beasts, learn about the life cycle of the butterfly and fill bird feeders to learn about and observe wild birds. Children use the laptop computer and programmable toys such as the remote controlled cars and electronic letter games to support and consolidate their learning. They have good opportunities to develop their imaginations. For example, children enthusiastically re-enact stories using the finger puppets in the puppet theatre and use their imaginations during role play activities. Children work in Santa's workshop, care for the babies in the baby clinic and book a holiday in the travel agents. Children enjoy playing with the cars and garage, however, they do not always have access to additional resources to enable them to fully extend and develop their own ideas as they play. They enthusiastically sing a repertoire of songs and action rhymes such as 'Here we go round the mulberry bush' and 'When Santa got stuck up the chimney'. Children differentiate colours with growing confidence and explore a variety of media and materials. For example, children feel the texture of the shaving foam, stir porridge oats and water together, immerse the sea creatures in water, dig in the sand, paint and chalk on the chalk board. However, children do not always have sufficient opportunities to fully express their own ideas during art and craft activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed into the nursery. They are respected as individuals and the staff ensure that they are aware of each child's individual requirements and are able to meet these consistently well. Children are confident in their relationships with the staff, who have a warm, caring relationship with the children. This increases their sense of belonging and promotes their emotional development. Clear routines to the day help young children feel settled and secure. Children are developing a good understanding of the boundaries within the nursery and respond to direction from adults in a positive way. They receive regular praise, encouragement and support which promotes their confidence and self-esteem. As a result children behave well. Children are learning to share and play together, for example, as they play board games and take turns with toys. They are beginning to develop a positive view of society and the wider world as they take part in activities and use resources that reflect diversity.

For example, children make Diwali cards and clay pots to celebrate Diwali, they make rabbit hats to celebrate Easter and create a large cardboard dragon to celebrate the Chinese New Year. Although there are no children currently attending the setting with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, staff are to provide care through discussing their needs with parents and other professionals. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's care, welfare and learning are promoted because relationships with parents are open and professional. Staff are approachable and friendly, helping parents to feel secure, at ease and confident with the care and learning provided for their child. A detailed portfolio with written policies and procedures is available to parents, including the complaints procedure. Clear systems are in place to establish and exchange information about the care of the child and their achievements. For example, parents receive a prospectus and are asked to provide the staff with written information about their child when they start at the group. This helps to ensure continuous and consistent care for the children. Staff successfully help children and their parents to ease the transition from home to the setting through their effective settling-in procedures. Parents speak positively about the setting

The partnership with parents and carers in receipt of nursery education is good. Parents receive information about the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. This helps parents gain an understanding about how their child will make progress towards the early learning goals. Systems are currently being developed to encourage parents to share what they know about their child when they enter the Foundation Stage. Parents are encouraged to play an active role in their child's care and learning. They receive regular news letters which provides information about how they can support their child's learning at home. Parents are able to view their child's achievement folder and speak to staff at any time, as well as having more formal opportunities to discuss their child's achievements and progress towards the early learning goals.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and settled in the caring environment. They spend their time purposely and select from the range of activities and resources provided by the staff. However, children do not always have sufficient opportunities to select further resources and play materials to fully promote their learning and development. Children receive a good level of adult support, encouragement and sensitive interaction throughout the session. Their welfare, care and learning is promoted by a good range of records, policies and procedures. High staff to child ratios ensure that children are safe and well supervised. Clear vetting procedures are in place for checking that all staff are suitable to work with children. Records are stored securely and confidentiality is maintained. Children's records and achievements are openly shared with parents and their contributions are valued. They are cared for by suitably qualified staff who develop their practice through accessing and attending further training courses.

Leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. Staff and management are committed to the continuous improvement and development of the setting. They work well together as a team, are positive and enthusiastic. Daily discussion ensures that all staff are fully informed and valued. Systems are in place for recruitment, induction and appraisal and the professional development of staff is promoted. However, clear systems are not in place to effectively monitor and evaluate the provision of nursery education and the quality of teaching. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Care

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to improve one aspect of its practice. A written statement about special needs which is consistent with current legislation and guidance and includes both learning difficulties and/or disabilities are now in place. This ensures the welfare of all children.

Nursery Education

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to improve two aspects of its practice. Staff have now developed opportunities for children to freely select and use writing equipment during their play. As a result children are beginning to recognise that print carries meaning. Staff have continued to develop different ways of incorporating individual children's learning styles into the planning. As a result children are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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 by Ofsted.

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 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 that all rooms are maintained at an adequate temperature and that all staff are aware of the possible signs and symptoms of children at risk
- increase opportunities for children to access further resources to encourage them to initiate their own play and learning (also applies to nursery education).

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):

- continue to develop staff knowledge of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice

- continue to monitor and evaluate the provision of nursery education and the quality of teaching.

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