



## Ducklings Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY273328
<b>Inspection date</b>	31 January 2007
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<b>Registered person</b>	Carol Butler / Neil Butler
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Ducklings Day Nursery is one of two nurseries run by the same owner. It opened in 2004 and operates from two rooms in a converted detached property in West Derby, Liverpool. A maximum of 16 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 17.30 all year round. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 21 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Of these, two children receive funding for early education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs seven staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises are suitably clean and staff follow appropriate hygiene procedures to help protect children from the risk of cross infection. Anti-bacterial spray is used on tables and staff wear protective clothing when changing nappies. Children are developing an awareness of personal hygiene through the daily routine. Older children independently toilet themselves, and all children wash their hands at appropriate times and clean their teeth after meals. Staff follow the nursery's sickness policy and ensure parental consent is in place for the administration of medication. Some staff have completed first aid training in order to deal with minor accidents.

Children learn about healthy eating and are well nourished. Staff cook nutritional homemade meals such as pasta bake, hot pot and vegetable curry. They introduce children to different tastes and textures at snack time with food such as garlic bread, raw vegetables and dips, and cinnamon bagels. During planned food tasting sessions children learn about unusual fruits, such as passion fruit. Drinking water is made freely available for older children, and babies are regularly offered drinks to ensure they are re-hydrated.

Children benefit from regular physical activity. Outside play is incorporated into the daily routine and children begin to develop their balance, coordination, strength and stamina as they play on the climbing frame and wheeled toys. Staff organise games using bats, balls and cones, and indoors children enjoy dancing and marching to 'The grand old duke of York'. Staff talk to the children about the importance of wearing hats, coats and gloves in the cold weather. Babies and young children learn to gain control of their bodies as they begin to crawl and walk. Staff cuddle and hold babies to bottle feed and closely interact with them, fostering their emotional well-being. Young children sleep on mats, babies sleep in their buggies or car seats. However, there is not a thermometer in the rooms where babies and young children sleep in order for staff to ensure that the correct temperature is always maintained.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. All visitors are closely monitored, helping to protect children from unknown persons entering the premises. Colourful displays of the children's artwork, posters, photographs and information for the parents create a welcoming environment. Children independently select safe and suitable toys and resources from low level storage units. Sufficient furniture is provided for children to comfortably sit together to play or rest and relax.

Generally satisfactory procedures are in place to protect children from hazards and dangers. Staff conduct a daily risk assessment on toys and resources, and finger guards have been placed on some doors. However, the radiator in the children's toilet area sometimes becomes very hot to touch, posing a potential danger to children. Staff help children to become aware of keeping themselves safe. For example, staff remind children to be careful when running around and they talk to them about safely crossing the road. Children learn about people who help us.

They enjoy dressing up as fire fighters and police, and occasionally have visits to the local fire station. Staff practise the fire evacuation with children, and on outings reins, wrist straps and buggies are used to help keep children safe.

Babies and young children are securely strapped into high chairs for meals. The sensory room provides a safe area for babies to experience some sense of danger. They learn to confidently climb over large soft shapes and crawl through the ball pool. Children are further safeguarded as staff have a good awareness of what to do should they have any concerns about a child. They follow written child protection procedures and there is a named staff member who is responsible for coordinating child protection issues.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of stimulating and interesting activities, helping them to make progress in their learning. Staff provide many opportunities for babies and young children to fully explore their senses. They enjoy various tactile activities. Babies smile and chuckle in delight as they experience the soft texture of foam soap, excitedly patting and splashing the foam. Treasure baskets with soft and hard toys, different textured materials and glittery objects such as tinsel are provided for children to freely access. In the sensory room babies and young children touch the fine strands of optic lights and watch the patterns projected onto the ceiling.

Young children become competent learners and discover cause and effect as they press buttons and turn knobs on activity centres to make visual and sound effects. Their imagination is fostered well and they enjoy painting and making collage pictures using glue and different coloured strands of paper. Staff sit with children to motivate their play and use language, voice intonation and facial expression, to help babies become skilful communicators. Often stories are read on a one to one basis and staff use repetitive language to reinforce the children's understanding. Staff re-enact stories such as 'Goldilocks and the three bears' using props, to help the children's learning.

All staff have accessed training on the 'Birth to three matters' and have started to introduce the framework. Activities are planned and staff use observation to assess how the children are progressing. Individual development reports have been devised for staff to record the children's progress, using the components of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. However, staff have not yet started to make full use of these and some entries have not been dated in order to effectively track the children's development.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of the teaching and learning of the nursery education is satisfactory. Children are making sound progress towards the early learning goals. Staff enthusiastically motivate the children and talk and listen to them in small groups, often affording one to one attention. Staff make good use of time and resources and plan a flexible daily timetable that incorporates a wide range of different activities. Staff have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and stepping stones. They devise long, medium and short term plans and identify the intended learning outcome of specific activities. However, many focused

activities are not fully evaluated in order to ascertain the success of the activity. Staff do not identify how children should be grouped for adult-led activities, taking into account their differing abilities.

Observation is used well to assess and monitor the children's progress and staff complete progress reports on each child. However, planned, adult directed activities are not always used productively to extend the older, more able children's progress. Children of differing maturity and ability sit together to participate in all focused activities. This results in some children not being fully challenged in order to extend their learning and independence. For example, during baking activities staff demonstrate how to add the ingredients, but do not allow children to spoon in the flour or the sugar. All children stir the mixture, but there are many missed opportunities for older children to be given roles of responsibility, such as spooning the mixture into the cake cases and calculating how many are needed for the number of children present.

Children are happy and confidently initiate interaction with staff and their peers. They demonstrate good concentration skills as they complete puzzles and construct with building blocks. Children independently attempt to dress themselves for outdoor play. They fasten buttons and zips, put on hats and staff support only when necessary. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories, helping to foster their language and literacy skills. However, during some group stories older children are not given the opportunity to re-tell or further discuss the contents of the story to fully reinforce their understanding. Opportunity is provided for children to practise mark-making as they freely access pencils, crayons, paper and a note pad. Storage boxes display pictorial images alongside the written word for children to develop an awareness of print carrying meaning. During the daily routine staff use questioning well and encourage children to engage in purposeful conversation, such as discussing their home life and going on holiday. Children begin to recognise their written name and letter cards help to reinforce the children's knowledge of the alphabet.

Children become competent at counting during planned activities and older more able children occasionally count during practical activities, such as counting how many children are present at snack time. During sand and water play children learn about volume, filling big and little containers with water and pouring it through the large or small funnel. Magnifying glasses are provided for children to explore and examine snails when 'bug hunting' outside. They learn about living things and the changing seasons. They grow plants and herbs in the sensory garden and watch bulbs appearing during the spring months. The children's imagination is fostered through role play activities and dressing up. Children express their own ideas and thoughts in creative artwork. They enjoy choosing and mixing their own coloured paint and have fun making collage pictures with different materials.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are warmly greeted by staff and confidently enter the nursery, settling quickly into activities. There is an effective key worker system and staff are knowledgeable about each child, helping to foster the children's confidence and self-esteem. Children gain an awareness of their culture, the culture of others, and the diversity of the world in which they live. They access a wide range of toys and resources that reflect positive images of race, culture, gender

and disability. They play with small world people in wheelchairs, different cultural dolls and a black Persona Doll. The role play area includes items such as Chinese bowls with chopsticks and Japanese plates. All children access all toys, and activities are not gender specific. Babies and young children develop a good sense of belonging and explore what they look like and who they are in the various wall mirrors.

The nursery is proactive in ensuring good support is given to children with special needs. Staff work closely with parents and outside agencies to ensure all children are included. Good consideration is given to providing many sensory areas in order to further promote the welfare and development of all children. Staff are calm and consistent in approach and create a positive atmosphere. Praise and encouragement is used to reinforce the children's good behaviour. Children are constantly reminded to share, take turns and be kind to each other. Children are generally well behaved. They are familiar with the routine and are cooperative, helping to tidy away and follow simple instructions. This results in the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development being fostered.

Staff welcome parents into the setting and informally share information through daily discussion. Regular newsletters keep parents up to date on events and issues and written information is displayed on the parents' notice board. The children's learning programme is also displayed, including weekly planners, the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage. Parents receive an information pack with copies of all policies and procedures. The partnership with parents and carers of educationally funded children is good. Parents may informally discuss with staff their child's progress and development at any time. Formalised parent evenings also provide valuable opportunities for parents to meet with key workers and to see their children's work folders and written progress reports.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by qualified staff who use their skills to provide stimulating and interesting activities. There are effective procedures in place for the recruitment and vetting of staff. Staffing ratios are maintained and contingency arrangements are in place to cover staff absence. Staff training is identified during staff meetings and at appraisal sessions. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. There is a commitment to improve the outcomes for children and activity plans are monitored. However, clear direction is not always set for staff who work with funded children to evaluate their teaching methods to ensure that older, more able children are fully challenged.

The organisation of space and resources is satisfactory and staff are appropriately deployed in order to support children at all times. All regulatory documentation is in place, although some policies need to be updated. The operational plan contains limited information about staffing and does not include how staff are deployed, their roles of responsibilities, qualifications or recent training. Any complaints are documented. However, the method for recording complaints is not in line with current legislation. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

The previous care inspection recommended that the nursery: conduct a risk assessment of the premises; ensure that all fire doors are kept shut; ensure that anyone responsible for the preparation and handling of food is aware of the legal requirements; ensure that the child protection procedure complies with legal requirements; increase the amount of fresh fruit and vegetables in the diet; make available to parents a written statement on the procedure to follow if they wish to make a complaint; and make safe the outside play area.

The staff conduct a daily risk assessment of the premises. All fire doors are now kept shut. Two staff members have completed training in food hygiene. The written child protection procedure has been updated and is in line with regulations. Children have fresh fruit and vegetables each day. The complaints procedure is displayed and includes Ofsted contact details. The outside play area has been made safe with the removal of a tree stump and paving slabs, the drains are also now covered.

### **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 to 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### **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 the radiator in the children's toilet area is not too hot or make it inaccessible to children.
- monitor the room temperature where immobile babies are cared for, and babies and young children sleep
- continue to develop the recording of the children's progress reports and use to inform future plans

- update the operational plan to include more information about staff qualifications, training and roles of responsibility. Devise a new method for recording complaints, in line with current legislation.

### **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):

- improve the staff's ability to fully challenge older more able children during planned group activities and provide children with greater roles of responsibility
- evaluate focused activities and use the information to inform future plans
- ensure children are suitably grouped during adult led activities, taking into account their age, ability and understanding.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)