

Ducklings Day Nursery

1 Royal Croft, Liverpool, Merseyside, L12 2BJ

Inspection date	04/08/2014
Previous inspection date	18/08/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- The highly qualified staff have an excellent understanding of how to support children's learning and development needs. Timely, accurate observations and assessments are used to plan stimulating activities to support each child in reaching their full potential.
- The provider offers an excellent range of quality, accessible resources and activities, both indoors and outdoors. This ensures children are able to explore and make independent choices to ensure rapid progress based on their starting points.
- Children clearly demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning as they play spontaneously or interact with the staff. Children of all ages spend some time together, which enhances their social skills as they support each other's learning.
- Partnerships with parents and other professionals are highly effective and strongly contribute to meeting children's needs. Daily updates, learning journals and parents' evenings encourage parents to be fully involved and contribute to their child's learning journey.
- The provider and staff have a comprehensive understanding of safeguarding and implement highly effective policies and procedures to ensure children are safe and their well-being is superbly promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the four playrooms and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager, early years professional and owners of the provision.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children, the provider's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day and from information included in the setting's own parent survey.

Inspector

Catherine Hargreaves

Full report

Information about the setting

Ducklings Day Nursery was registered in 2004 on the Early Years Register. It is one of four settings owned and managed privately by the same provider. It operates from a converted property, situated in the West Derby area of Liverpool. The nursery opens five days a week from 7.30am until 6pm, all year round, except for bank holidays and a week at Christmas. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. There are currently 30 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age range. There are four main rooms and all children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area. Pre-school children are mainly cared for on the first floor and there is no lift access. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children, who speak English as an additional language. There is a team of eight staff plus regular input from the qualified owners and qualified cook. Six staff working directly with the children have an appropriate early years qualification, including one with Early Years Professional status. Two students are working towards qualifications at level 2.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the already excellent teaching interventions, range of resources and wealth of activities, by further developing research and training, for example, in physical activity programmes.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

The highly qualified staff team have an excellent understanding of how to support children's well-being, learning and development needs. Timely, accurate observations and assessments are used to plan stimulating and challenging activities, which support each child in reaching their full potential. The provider offers an excellent range of quality, accessible resources and activities, both indoors and outdoors. Each child has a key person, who understands their needs, interests and abilities exceptionally well. This ensures children are able to explore and make independent choices to ensure rapid progress from their starting points. Children clearly demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning as they play spontaneously or interact with the staff. Children of all ages spend some time together, which thoroughly enhances their social skills as they support each other's learning.

Management has recruited a staff team, who are experienced and well qualified. As a result, the quality of the learning environment and planned activities are well matched to each child's age and stage of development. This means that all children have superb

support to make rapid progress in their learning and development compared to other children of a similar age. Weekly analysis of observations and summaries of progress at age two to three years are detailed to ensure children's excellent progress continues. Summaries of progress are also carried out for every child each year, so parents can be assured that any gaps in development are swiftly identified, explored and specialist help sought where necessary. Staff in the baby room understand that the needs of children vary and that a close relationship with parents and a nurturing approach for babies forms the basis for life-long learning. Plans for the environment and activities reflect children's emerging interests. Staff understand that children often like to repeat activities, such as filling and emptying and transporting. Therefore, they supply resources to support and extend these activities. Pre-school staff take an enthusiastic part in children's play and investigations. They get down to children's eye level and encourage all children to take part in the activity. Staff ask questions that can be answered in different ways, so all children can participate. They use language to inspire the children to try and do things differently or think about previous learning to help with current situations. For example, a group of pre-school children explore how to transport water using a bucket with holes in it. They fill up watering cans and investigate how it moves down tubes and drain pipes. Babies join in by throwing pebbles into the water and watching them splash. They later find other objects to throw in as they learn about cause and effect. Staff allow babies to climb into the shallow water, as they understand that interrupting their play to remove clothes could affect their enjoyment of the 'here and now'.

Staff understand the importance of sustaining thinking over time through projects. For example, a recent visit to a community grocer prompted discussions about healthy eating. Children developed this line of thinking into making their own vegetables from clay, which were hardened and painted and placed into a basket. They were used as props to role play a story they had read, which later led to the children cutting up real vegetables in the home corner. Children created a book with photographs to record their learning journey and an older child wrote sentences to describe each photograph. This inspiring method of teaching sustains thinking and helps children to make connections, which evolve over a period of time. Consequently, children are acquiring an excellent range of skills for moving onto primary school.

Children and families, who speak little or no English, are supported extremely well through the use of photographs to record their child's day. Interpreters are sourced to support families, for example, on a short stay as siblings stay in the local children's hospital. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are currently not in attendance. However, staff have a very good knowledge of professionals they can call on for support. Children with delays in their physical or communication development are supported extremely well as they work closely with parents to engage strategies. A recent course provided staff with new skills and knowledge to support early communication with babies and toddlers. Another course inspired staff to create spaces for toddlers to spend quiet time engaged in activities with fewer children. Staff understand that children, who can communicate well are more sociable and better able to make sense of new experiences.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Partnerships with parents and other professionals are highly effective and contribute strongly to meeting children's needs. Parents comment that their children enjoy their time at the setting and they are cared for extremely well by their key person. Staff have been highly supportive in helping children to settle-in as they thoroughly understand their needs through daily discussions with parents. As a result, children are very emotionally secure and able to rapidly develop in all other areas of learning. Staff set clear boundaries for children's behaviour. The high deployment of staff to children present means that children of mixed ages can play safely together on quieter days. Children know how to take sensible risks in their play because risks are assessed by staff as they plan challenging activities for their children. For example, a shallow water tray is used by pre-school children and babies are also enabled by staff, to explore the water safely.

Children know how to stay healthy by washing their hands after using the toilet and before meals. They brush their teeth because they have learnt how to brush properly by using a large-scale model of a mouth to practise on. At mealtimes, pre-school children are helped to serve themselves food and pour their own drinks of water. Staff talk about what they are eating and link it to a recent visit to a community grocer. The cook also has a relevant qualification in childcare and creates a very balanced, healthy menu, which is reviewed based upon children's tastes. Children are very effectively supported to use a fork and knife, which develops their physical and social skills during mealtimes. Children's enjoyment of the outdoor area means that they spend much of their time outside where they develop excellent physical skills using larger equipment. They also develop their artistic and creative skills on a larger scale, for example, as they explore the outdoor water activities and spray-paint onto walls of paper. Children make outdoor dens to create shade from the hot sun and a cosy area to relax and read in. The owners provide resources accessible to the youngest children and make those, which are not readily available to buy. This outdoor space actively contributes to the children's high levels of enjoyment and self-esteem as they sustain their interest in different activities.

Staff understand how dummies can comfort babies and understand they can impede communication. Therefore, once babies are settled, they encourage them to place their dummy in their named pots. Staff also encourage toddlers to keep their dribble bibs on, so they stay dry and comfortable throughout the day. Children, who take a rest or have a sleep, have the choice of cots or sleep mats. Linen used for sleeping is washed everyday to ensure a healthy environment.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The owners and manager of the nursery have an expert understanding of their roles and responsibilities to meet the safeguarding and welfare, and the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. All relevant policies, procedures and insurances are in place and are effectively implemented by the whole staff team. For example, accidents and incidents are evaluated each month to ensure there are no underlying reasons behind them and that no one child or age group is at more risk than another. As a result, children are kept extremely safe and well supported during their time at the nursery. Safeguarding children is given the highest priority. Appropriate checks on

adults are carried out to ensure they are suitable to care for children. The designated lead for safeguarding has a clear understanding of the role and all staff are very confident in what to do should they have concerns about a child. The owners have installed a warning system if the side door is opened, as an extra precaution. They have recruited a staff team, who are experienced and most are highly qualified. Students are consistently supported and coached, so they quickly learn similar skills. As a result, the quality of the learning environment and planned activities are extremely well matched to each child's age and stage of development. This means that all babies and young children are supported highly effectively to make excellent progress in their learning and development.

The performance management of staff is highly effective in securing the necessary improvements to the already expert teaching. The manager undertakes observations of staff practice and developmental feedback sets standards for improvements in teaching during staff appraisals and monthly training meetings. The owner gives support and feedback to students as they interact with babies and children. This ensures that students understand why they are doing something, not just what to do, which ultimately provides for consistency across all staff teaching. The nursery owners have systems in place to monitor setting-wide training and improvement measures to ensure high quality provision and best practice. The owners network and research practice to provide monthly training events, which inspire staff to provide dynamic and vibrant enhancements to the already innovative practice. Staff have recently been coached to research their own ideas for enhancements to practice. This exemplary commitment of motivated staff ensures children receive significantly skilled support in all that they do. There is scope to further promote a healthy lifestyle to children and families, for example, by researching and implementing a health-promotion programme.

Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's development from their first visit. Staff understand that parents know their child best and they are the best people to support them. Parents' evenings and 'stay and play' sessions are arranged for parents to attend to see what their child prefers at nursery. Parents have commented on how they have learned about child development and taken home ideas from these events. This means that children's learning is extended from nursery to home and vice versa. Recent training has provided for smaller cosy corners, especially for toddlers to encourage earlier communication skills. Staff have recorded that children's language is more developed as a result of implementing ideas from the course. Partnership working with external agencies and professionals is ongoing and developed as the setting participates in local networking events to support children moving to new settings. The setting supports hospital students on training from the local children's hospital to learn more about their development. A recent funded initiative enables families with English as an additional language to utilise services at the setting, while a sibling requires a stay in the hospital. Therefore, the setting is pro-active in ensuring that it welcomes children with various needs and can support their various situations both short and long term.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of inspection
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY273328
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	856138
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	30
Name of provider	Carol Elizabeth Butler and Neil Thomas Butler Partnership
Date of previous inspection	18/08/2009
Telephone number	0151 228 8081

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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