

Inspection of Little Ducklings Pre-School

Holbein Close, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 3EX

Inspection date:

25 October 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children have varied support for their learning and the quality of teaching is inconsistent. Although children are settled and engaged, their learning is often incidental, which does not support them to remain interested and focused. Staff do not fully consider what children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), need to progress in their learning. Leaders do not give staff the support they need to plan for children's learning successfully.

However, despite these weaknesses, children are confident to enter the pre-school. They run in to see their familiar adults, and are warmly greeted. Children eagerly look around to see what staff have provided for them to play with. Staff know the children they care for well, and ensure their favourite resources are easily accessible. For instance, children search out the dough to model with. This thoughtful preparation by staff helps children to make independent choices.

Staff support children to learn about boundaries and respect. For example, they hold a group time each morning to remind children of the rules in the pre-school. Staff help children learn each other's names and the names of the adults. This helps children feel valued and supports them to feel safe and confident in the staff's care.

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

- Leaders have recently designed an ambitious curriculum to meet the needs of the children who attend the pre-school. However, this is not fully embedded. Staff do not consistently implement good-quality teaching for children, including those with SEND. Not all staff understand how to promote children's learning through play. At times, staff do not know how to build on what children know and can do. Children's learning is not consistently supported well by staff.
- Leaders generally support staff well. They hold regular individual meetings with staff to monitor the quality of their practice. Team meetings and an open-door policy to leaders helps to make staff feel supported. However, these arrangements are not effective in identifying weaknesses and areas where teaching is inconsistent. Leaders do not monitor staff practice well enough to know when staff need more help. At times, this means staff do not deliver effective teaching, leaving children lacking focus. This affects children's attitudes to learning. Staff do not benefit from consistent support and encouragement to develop their skills and knowledge.
- Children with SEND are generally identified and some children benefit from effective plans to support their learning. For instance, staff know how to build on children's developing vocabulary through songs and stories. However, this is not consistent. Some children do not receive timely intervention to help them close

gaps they have in their learning.

- Staff encourage children to develop healthy and active lifestyles. For example, they support children to balance on blocks, throw beanbags into targets and play energetically. Staff understand how to promote some good hygiene routines, such as by teaching children to wash their hands effectively before eating. However, they have not fully considered how to support children's dental well-being. Children do not understand or benefit from teaching about good oral health.
- Staff build partnerships with parents and external professionals that work with children. Parents report on the effective communication from staff that keeps them informed about their children's learning. However, staff have not fully developed partnerships with other settings that children attend. This does not help to ensure continuity for children's care and learning.
- Staff are positive role models for children's developing speech. They teach children new words and repeat back what children say. Staff help children to make links to what they know, such as singing about spiders when they see cobwebs. Children learn to communicate their wants and needs.
- Leaders use additional funding effectively. For instance, they recognise the importance of building strong bonds between staff and children when they first start. Leaders make sure children have opportunities for quality time with their familiar adults in their early days at pre-school. They support children's emotional well-being effectively.
- Staff follow children's interests and fascinations. For example, when children are intrigued about why cars are wet but it has not rained, they teach them about dew. Staff support and encourage children to take notice of the natural world, such as showing them snails they find. At times, children are self-motivated to join in and learn from staff.

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?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
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ensure staff have a full understanding of how to implement the curriculum and deliver effective teaching that helps children build meaningfully on what they already know and can do	25/11/2024
implement an effective system for staff supervision, coaching and mentoring, to ensure that weaknesses in staff practice are identified and addressed	25/11/2024
put in place effective arrangements for supporting children with SEND.	25/11/2024

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

- support staff to promote children's good health, including their oral health, more effectively
- develop systems for sharing information about children's learning to enhance continuity for their care and education when they attend other settings.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY424761
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10367163
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	25
Name of registered person	Little Ducklings Pre-School Basingstoke
Registered person unique reference number	RP907293
Telephone number	01256 413794
Date of previous inspection	11 February 2019

Information about this early years setting

Little Ducklings Pre-School re-registered in 2011, and is situated in Basingstoke, Hampshire. The pre-school employs nine members of staff. Seven staff members hold appropriate qualifications at level 3 or above. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday, from 8am to 3pm, during school term times. The pre-school provides funded early education for children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Emma Dean

Inspection activities

- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about the curriculum and what they intend for the children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector talked to the staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- A meeting was held between the inspector, the provider and manager. The inspector looked at relevant documentation and saw evidence of suitability of staff.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.

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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