

Inspection of The Ducklings Day Nursery - Skelmersdale

Daniels Lane, Skelmersdale WN8 9NH

Inspection date: 3 January 2025

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Leaders and staff create an environment that is welcoming, supportive and places the child at the centre of everything they do. Staff are exceptionally nurturing and greet children and their families with smiles on their arrival. Children feel safe and form secure attachments with staff, who promote a strong sense of belonging to each child. This helps children to feel happy and settle quickly. In addition, children benefit from valuable praise and encouragement from staff, which supports their self-esteem and confidence well.

Staff are excellent role models and have high expectations for children's behaviour. Children show respect for people and their environments. They fully understand the expected behaviours. They develop strong and secure relationships with adults and peers. They display kindness and consideration for their friends. Children play wonderfully together, for example through role-play activities such as going to the hospital. Children practise essential social skills, including empathy, sharing and cooperation. Children's behaviour is exemplary.

The dedication staff give to providing high-quality care and education is admirable. The creative, ambitious and flexible curriculum is well thought out and exciting for children. It is embedded effectively throughout the nursery and seamlessly builds on what children know and can already do. Highly knowledgeable staff carefully implement and adapt teaching to meet children's individual needs. They skilfully intervene at appropriate times to add value to children's learning and challenge their thinking skills even further. All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are incredibly well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

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

- Staff are highly qualified, and a programme of professional development equips them with extensive knowledge about how children develop and learn. Staff report high levels of well-being and say they work together closely as a team. Exceptionally thorough oversight, and reviews of staff practice from leaders, ensures that the quality of teaching is consistently outstanding.
- Staff plan exciting activities that build on what children know and need to learn next. For example, children revisit a science activity, and they explore how water freezes. Together they explore how to submerge objects, such as small-world dinosaurs, into water and wait for the water to freeze. Once complete, staff expertly introduce new vocabulary, such as 'solidify' as children discuss how the 'liquid' has changed into ice. Children are highly engaged and demonstrate excellent levels of concentration as they use a range of tools to smash the ice and release the objects. Staff embrace children's curiosity and develop their

critical thinking skills incredibly well.

- Staff implement highly effective strategies that support children's language development. They hold ongoing discussions with the children as they play, modelling new vocabulary and asking questions to promote conversation. Children have numerous opportunities to sing and take part in action rhymes throughout the day. Staff read books regularly to children to support their listening and attention skills. This helps children make superb progress and develop into confident communicators.
- Babies are highly motivated and show great enthusiasm in the meaningful learning opportunities. Staff skilfully demonstrate how to use different resources, such as the toy farm with animals, encouraging children to practise the sounds the animals make. In addition, babies thoroughly enjoy playing with coloured rice as they are encouraged to develop their senses and physical skills.
- Staff teach children how to do things for themselves. For example, pre-school children delight in being assigned roles at lunchtime. They develop a sense of achievement as they successfully complete tasks, such as laying the table and clearing their friends' plates once they have finished. Children develop their independence.
- Staff teach children about healthy lifestyles. They focus on dental hygiene to help children to understand how to look after their teeth. Staff make excellent use of opportunities to discuss and reinforce the importance of washing hands. Two-year-old children know they need to wash their hands after carrying out self-care tasks, such as wiping their nose.
- The provision for children with SEND is exceptional. Staff adapt their teaching methods based on each child's progress and feedback from other professionals. The nursery has excellent links with other professionals who provide specialist care for children with SEND. It welcomes this collaborative partnership and puts into place individual support plans for children. This ensures that all children make the progress they are capable of.
- Partnerships with parents are of an exceptionally high standard. Parents are encouraged to play an active role in children's learning. Parents comment on the all-round support they receive from the nursery. For example, parent workshops are offered, where they can attend and learn information to support them. For example, they learn about how to manage emotions and are provided with learning sacks to support the continuation of children's learning at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY542383
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10364264
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	71
Number of children on roll	105
Name of registered person	Ducklings Day Nurseries Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP527362
Telephone number	01695 726539
Date of previous inspection	9 January 2019

Information about this early years setting

The Ducklings Day Nursery - Skelmersdale was registered in 2016 and is situated in Lancashire. The nursery employs 18 members of childcare staff. Of these, 12 are qualified at level 3 or above, including two who hold qualified teacher status. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 8am to 6pm. The nursery offers the government funded childcare places.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Kelly Little

Inspection activities

- The manager showed the inspector around the nursery and explained how they organise the curriculum.
- The inspector observed children playing and learning and evaluated the quality of children's learning.
- Parents spoke to the inspector and discussed their views of the nursery.
- The inspector spoke to children and staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The manager evaluated an activity with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, including that relating to staff suitability.

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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