

Little Fishes at St. Peters

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	120102
Inspection date	15 October 2007
Inspector	Hazel Stuart-Buddery / Catherine Hill
Setting Address	St. Peters Church Hall, Ash Church Road, Ash, Aldershot, Hampshire, GU12 6LU
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Registered person	Little Fishes at St. Peters
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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 satisfactory. 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?

Little Fishes at St. Peters opened in 2000 . It operates from St Peter's Church Centre in the village of Ash in Surrey. Children are accommodated in the church hall and use is also made of an adjacent room for some activities. There is an enclosed garden area which is used for outside play. The building is on one level and has appropriate wheelchair access. The pre-school is managed by the church and serves the local area. The group is registered to care for a maximum of 26 children.

There are currently 43 children from two and a half to four years on roll. This includes 26 who receive nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group welcomes children with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week (Monday to Friday) during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 12:45. The pre-school offers a lunchtime club until 13:14 during the summer term.

The group employ seven staff to work with the children. Of these, three have early years qualifications to level 3 and two hold level 2 qualifications, two are currently on training programmes.

The pre-school have achieved an accreditation through the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good hygiene procedures through daily routines and explanation from the staff. With some help from the staff younger children explain that they need to wash their hands before they eat to wash away the germs. The spread of infection is prevented as the group have good nappy changing procedures and children use liquid soap and paper towels. Staff gather relevant information regarding diet and medical history to ensure individual needs are met. Children benefit from healthy snacks of fresh fruit and are encouraged to try new food such as popadoms and naan bread. Children are offered drinks at snack time, although they do not have independent access to drinking water throughout the session.

Children have daily opportunities to develop their physical skills. They confidently use a range of small scale equipment such as paint brushes, pens and glue sticks. Children enjoy playing outside in the fresh air, some children ride bikes and skilfully manoeuvre around obstacles riding as fast as they can. Staff ensure that prior written consent is obtained from parents to administer medication and seek emergency medical treatment, this ensures that the health care needs of the children are met. Children are cared for appropriately if there is an accident as several members of staff hold a current first aid certificate.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play and learn in a safe and secure environment. The premises are made welcoming to children as pictures, posters and children's art work are displayed at low level. Children are kept safe by staff who are vetted and who demonstrate an awareness of safety. For example, staff remind some children not to run in the hall and give good explanations, children listen carefully and start to walk. Children have easy and safe access to a good range of age appropriate resources and activities that are displayed well by the staff. The resources are changed late morning to allow time for more focused activities with individual key workers.

Effective child protection procedures promote and safeguard children's welfare within the setting. Some staff have completed training in this area and information is shared with staff at regular meetings. A comprehensive policy outlines the groups responsibilities with regard to child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and engaged in play throughout the session. Children arrive happily and separate from their carers with ease. Younger children are offered support as needed while encouraging them to be independent whenever possible. Children are confident and

communicate easily with adults and their peers. They play happily alongside each other and independently. For example, one child lays on the floor mat and happily sorts the Lego animals, she places the elephants, lions and giraffes into groups as she sings to herself. Children confidently move between activities as they wish, they have good levels of self-esteem and enjoy the time they spend at the nursery.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have excellent relationships with children and use a range of teaching strategies to promote children's learning. They organise a stimulating, learning environment with a very good range of activities and resources set out to allow children to develop in all skill areas. However, not all activities have a clear learning objective or sufficiently challenge children to develop their learning. Staff maintain children's development records and make regular recorded observations of children's learning. Information gained from observations is used to plan the next steps in a child's learning, with target activities for progression planned for small group keyworker sessions. Children are very happy and relaxed and are making good progress towards the early learning goals. They are familiar with group routines and separate from their parents and/or carers and sit quietly on the mat for registration. They are motivated to learn and persevere with activities until they have achieved. For example, they sit and concentrate well to complete a 25 piece puzzle. They take responsibility for themselves and their environment as they attend to personal hygiene, put their coats on for outside play and help tidy resources away. They support each other as they use the computer together and behave very well as they are actively occupied and sensitively supported by kind, caring staff. Staff set clear guidelines for behaviour and act as positive role models with regard to good manners. Children understand what is expected of them and respond appropriately to staff requests, for example, to line up for outside play.

Children access a good range of books and information which develops their understanding of the meaning of print. Staff make books of events in the children's lives, for example when a fire engine visited the setting, and children are able to relive the experience in photographs and words by getting staff to read to them. They listen attentively to stories and use picture clues to join in with the story. They have good opportunities to access resources to mark make and some write their name with recognisable letters. An excellent range of activities are planned to develop children's communication, language and literacy skills with opportunities to develop, for example, an understanding of rhyme and letter/sound links. Staff effectively use opportunities throughout the session to reinforce and develop children's counting skills. Children count 22 present at registration and confidently count the number of different sets on puzzle pieces. They recognise written numbers and develop an understanding of simple calculation through singing number songs. They understand comparative language and correctly identify the smaller column in a row of coloured beads. They discuss the attributes of different shapes in a tray and have fun as they guess which shape is missing when their keyworker takes one away.

Children enthusiastically use the computer to support their learning. They skilfully manoeuvre the mouse to complete programmes and other children laugh and smile as they watch the onscreen antics of the programme's main character, Splodge. Daily calendar activities develop children's understanding of the passage of time and days of the week. They learn about life cycles and the natural world through planned topic work and through local walks, for example looking at spider webs in the hedgerow. They learn about diversity and the wider world as, for example, staff teach them about the festival of Eid. Children eagerly go outside for play in the fresh air. They ably negotiate steps on the climbing frame before joyfully coming down the

slide and use a range of wheeled toys as they play. For example, they display good coordination skills as they swiftly pedal tricycles while steering around the paved area following others on scooters. Indoors, they use a range of tools and equipment to reinforce and develop their fine motor control, such as glue sticks, brushes and scissors. They have fun as they take part in creative activities. They freely experiment as they paint, using their hands, brushes and other resources to apply the paint. They make spaceships from construction and absorb themselves in imaginary play with small world resources, such as the train set.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel good about themselves and show respect for each other, they share and take turns. For example, several children like to play on the computer, they sit patiently showing interest in what each other are doing until it is their turn. Staff foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children learn about diversity through planned topics. This week they learn about the festival of Eid and the Muslim faith and look at brightly coloured prayer mats. The group have a clear policy for behaviour management. Children benefit from the staff's positive approach and constant praise and encouragement. They are well behaved and polite.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are encouraged to support their child's learning and are invited to visit the group to gain a first hand insight into practice. They are kept well informed about their child's progress through both written and verbal feedback and have planned opportunities to meet with staff to discuss their child's learning targets. Parents receive detailed information about the group before their child starts. Notice boards and news letters keep parents informed of any relevant information. Parents report that they are happy with the care and education that their children receive.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children settle well and are happy within the group. Staff work very well as a team and are well deployed supporting children according to their needs. They organise space and resources well to allow the children to move around freely and safely. A good range of resources are selected by the staff and easily accessible to the children. Staff are encouraged to complete training in many areas including child protection, the inclusion of children and areas of the Foundations Stage.

There are good recruitment procedures in place. The manager is aware to check the on-going suitability of staff, although this procedure is an informal one. Staff have an awareness of the groups policies and procedures and inductions are completed for all new staff. Most required documentation is in place. However, the group are unaware of the October 2005 addendum to the National Standards and as a result have not implemented or shared with parents what the current procedures are. Overall, the group meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. Staff work well as a team to provide constant support and encouragement to children. Practice is regularly evaluated and professional development for staff is encouraged and supported. Management oversee the nursery education practice to ensure all aspects of learning are covered within planning. However,

they have not closely monitored all children's development records to ensure they clearly show children's progress through the stepping stones and targets for future short term learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the group were asked to develop the Child Protection policy to include the procedure to be followed in the event of allegations of abuse or neglect against a member of staff. The group have reviewed this policy which now reflects the current regulations.

Since the last nursery education inspection the setting have improved opportunities for children to develop their mathematical and self-help skills. Staff effectively use opportunities as they arise to develop children's counting skills during sessions, for example by encouraging children to count both at registration time and when children line up for outside play. Children show independence in managing their own needs as they pour their own drinks at snack time, put their work away in their drawers and put their coats on for outside play.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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.

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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 children have independent access to drinking water throughout the session
- formalise the procedures that are in place for the on-going suitability of existing staff
- ensure a complaints procedure is implemented and shared with parents in line with the October 2005 addendum to the National Standards.

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):

- ensure all activities challenge children's learning and have a clear learning objective

- monitor all children's development records closely to ensure they are maintained to clearly show children's progress through the stepping stones and future short term learning targets.

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