

Little Fishes Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	110268
Inspection date	07/06/2010
Inspector	Loraine Wardlaw
Setting address	St. James' Church Centre, Church Lane, Rowledge, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 4EN
Telephone number	01252 792402
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

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Description of the setting

Little Fishes Pre-School opened in 1996 and is run by the church council. It operates from St James' church centre in the village of Rowledge, near Farnham. Children have access to several rooms in the centre and an enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9.30 am to 3.00 pm on a Monday and Tuesday and from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm on a Wednesday to Friday. The setting is open term time only and children come from a wide geographical area.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register for a maximum of 26 children aged from two to five years. There are currently 45 children on roll who attend for sessional care or for the full day. There are ten members of staff employed by the church council to work with the children. Of these, eight members of staff are qualified to level two and above in early years. This includes two members of staff who have qualified teacher status. One member of staff is working towards a level three early years qualification. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate.

All children are welcomed warmly by the caring staff into the pre-school. Although children's learning needs are met, significant weaknesses in the setting's leadership and management systems mean that children's safeguarding and welfare needs are not being sufficiently met. Staff provide children with stimulating play activities and overall interact with children well. However, the numerous breaches of the Early Years Foundation Stage legal requirements are having an impact on the overall quality of the provision. The setting has started to evaluate its practices but they have not prioritised the weaknesses in their provision and addressed them sufficiently.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- ensure that all members of staff can implement an effective safeguarding children policy and procedure (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 07/07/2010
- ensure the safeguarding policy includes the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 07/07/2010

- ensure a written record is kept of medicines given to children (Promoting good health) 07/07/2010
- ensure the daily record of the names of the children looked after on the premises includes their hours of attendance (Documentation) 07/07/2010
- ensure the complaints procedure includes details for contacting Ofsted and an explanation that parents can make a complaint to Ofsted should they wish (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 07/07/2010
- ensure a written summary record of all complaints is maintained which includes the action taken (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 07/07/2010

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop the role of the key person to ensure there is effective two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise between parents and practitioners
- consistently analyse your observations to help plan 'what next' for individuals and groups of children
- introduce effective systems, for example, self-evaluation and management induction, to ensure that the individual needs of all children are met.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are not sufficiently safeguarded. When the newly appointed manager is absent, which occurs on a weekly basis, there is not a system in place to ensure that all staff are knowledgeable about and can implement an effective child protection procedure. The written child protection policy also does not include the procedure to take should an allegation be made against a member of staff. Both of these are specific legal requirements in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The induction system for deputy managers and managers is poor, which means that knowledge and systems are lacking. Policies are not clear, with many duplicates in place that are not organised well for staff and parents to see and understand. Particularly the complaints procedure and record. Although an incident was reported by the pre-school to Ofsted since the last inspection about a parental complaint, a record is not available for inspection. Records are not complete, such as the written records kept of medicines given to children and the record of children's attendance. All of these documents are legal requirements in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Practitioners ensure the environment is safe for children to use. Appropriate use is made of risk assessments with hazards being identified and dealt with accordingly.

The environment is suitably welcoming with photographs of the children displayed at play and on the summer outing. Children's work is on view on the walls and the main play room is satisfactorily set out into designated play areas, with some resources accessible to the children. During fine weather and when there are not any church activities on, a free-flow system is used so children can choose to play inside or outside. This is a strength of the provision. The organisation of the

morning involves freely chosen play and then whole group hand washing, the whole group looking at books, whole group snack time and then two smaller group times for a teaching and learning activity. Then child initiated play again. The routine does not effectively support the unique needs of all the children attending, and is not in line with Early Years Foundation Stage good practice.

The leadership and management systems within the setting have deteriorated greatly since the last inspection and the implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The manager receives support and feedback from the local authority to help identify areas for improvement. However, the most important safeguarding points for improvement have not been put right by management. Staff attend training to update their knowledge and skills on learning and development matters and feedback to the rest of the team at staff meetings. The pre-school seek the views of parents through an annual questionnaire. The analysis is that parents are happy with certain aspects of the pre-school, such as the friendly staff who relate well to their children. However, not all parents have been introduced to their child's key person and information sharing when a child first commences at the group on care and learning matters is basic. There is not an effective two-way flow of information so the key staff can get to know the children's starting points and play preferences. Staff are aware of the children with specific medical needs and, through discussion, demonstrate knowledge of how to support children learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs or disabilities.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

The confident and capable group of children happily come into pre-school each day and receive a warm welcome from the sympathetic and caring staff. They are keen to select an activity of their choosing and go about their play showing high levels of self-esteem, co-operation and enjoyment.

For example, a group of boys engage in an imaginative Superheroes game, dressing up in their favourite outfit and noisily play fight with one another but are careful not to hurt each other. They articulately talk about their 'baddy and goody game' to the adults and then design and build, making models from the stickle bricks to use in their game. On a different day the role play area is changed into an airport which engages many of the children's interest. Staff are on hand to promote their recognition of numbers as they sit on labelled chairs in the pretend airplane, to ask open ended questions and role model being an air hostess with the snack trolley. Children mark make at the airport desk, while an adult talks about boarding cards and passports, extending the vocabulary of some of the children attending. During child-initiated play children are engaged and learning well, although this is very dependent on the knowledge and skill of the practitioner which varies greatly across the staff team. Adult-led activities, however, including the whole group times, are not planned to successfully build on children's next learning steps, particularly for the younger children that attend the group. There are few opportunities for two-year-old children to be with their key person in a well-planned activity which builds on their specific knowledge and skills and promotes their emotional well-being. This is because children's starting points are

not discussed with parents when they first commence at the pre-school. The observational assessment system is not yet being used effectively to plan 'what next' for individuals and small groups of children. However, personalised fish play plans are about to be introduced by the staff.

Children enjoy the freedom of accessing the outdoors at their own free will. They play catch with the staff using large bouncy balls and explore the sand, pretending it is a kitchen using their vivid imaginations. Some children skilfully use scooters, weaving in and out of the garden equipment, although this is a potential hazard when the garden is popular. At mid-morning they all come together to wash their hands and sit down for a snack. Throughout the week the choice includes, fruit, biscuits, bread sticks and vegetables. Children practise the fire evacuation procedure and understand the reason why they do it. Although children may feel safe at this pre-school it is a false sense of security. This is because children do not understand that they are being supervised by a management team who have incorrect knowledge of how to protect them, should they disclose or show signs of possible abuse. Overall, the staff have had little updated training in this area of their work. Children behave generally well and take ownership of some of the routine activities. For example, the 'special helper' of the day helps to count out the cups for the whole group and pour the drinks at snack time. Children play with resources which promote the diverse world in which they live. Parents are invited in to share and talk about their cultural background, such as Australia, which gives children a positive sense of identity and also develops children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	4

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	4
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	4
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	4
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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