



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 251561

DfES Number: 518874

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	03/11/2003
Inspector Name	Lorraine Hunt

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Little Fishes Lakenheath
Setting Address	Cricket Club, Eriswell Road Lakenheath Brandon Suffolk IP27 9AF

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Little Fishes Lakenheath 1068028
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Little Fishes Lakenheath
Address	Cricket Club Eriswell Road Lakenheath Brandon Suffolk IP27 9AF

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Little Fishes is a committee run pre-school which opened in 1989 and moved to its present location in 1999. It operates from Lakenheath cricket pavilion and serves the local area.

There are currently 34 children on roll. This includes eleven funded 3 year olds and five funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting does not currently support any children with special needs or any who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00a.m. to 12.00p.m and 12:15 p.m. until 14.45 p.m.

Four staff work with the children. Three have recognised level 3 early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Little Fishes, Lakenheath is good. It enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in knowledge and understanding of the word and generally good progress in all other areas of learning.

Teaching is generally good. Staff have a clear knowledge of the Foundation curriculum and there is a good balance of child-initiated and adult directed activities which help children to learn and make progress. Children form good relationships with both their peers and adults. Staff are caring towards the children, take time to listen to them and skilfully use open-ended questioning to help develop children's confidence, language and thinking. Children benefit from the high level of adult attention afforded by the above average staffing ratio and the way in which staff are deployed in the session.

Systems for evaluating planned activities and assessing and monitoring children's progress is in place but the information is not used to inform future planning or identify "next steps". This results in some activities not being differentiated to adequately meet the developmental needs of all children.

Leadership and management is very good. The group benefits from strong leadership. The committee are very supportive and well organised, sharing the workload effectively. Staff training is given high priority. Staff know their roles and responsibilities, work well together as a team and share knowledge and ideas. The committee and staff are committed to further improvement in provision and practice.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents are provided with good written information about the setting and the curriculum and are well informed about their child's progress through daily feedback and termly parent interviews. Parents are encouraged to take an active part in their children's learning and are welcomed into the group to share their skills and cultural traditions.

What is being done well?

- Children make good relationships with both adults and their peers. They are happy, motivated to learn, interested in activities and confident to approach adults and to initiate or join in discussions.
- Children have many opportunities to explore and investigate and the interest table is used effectively to stimulate children's knowledge of the world. They are becoming aware of other cultures and beliefs and understand that some people have different lifestyles to their own.
- Staff are deployed well . They work alongside children to offer support, as and when necessary and to extend play and learning. They are interested in

what children say and do and encourage children to talk about their ideas, thoughts and feelings in one to one situations and in a group.

- There is good provision for children's imaginary play, both within the role play area, which is changed frequently to reflect different "locations" such as hospital, vets, shop and in small world resources and puppets. As a result children are able to explore their thoughts and feelings.
- Children's mathematical development is being effectively promoted through stimulating practical and meaningful activities such as making sandwiches, Christmas stocking washing line, number rhymes and games and through everyday routines.

What needs to be improved?

- the programme for creative development so that children have frequent opportunities to freely explore shape, textures, materials and a range of sticking, cutting and joining resources to express their imagination and creativity in art, design and construction.
- the programme for communication, language and literacy in order to develop children's early writing skills, children's use of questioning of "how" and "why" things happen or work and children's respect for and personal enjoyment of books.
- the use of children's progress records and evaluations of activities to identify "next steps" and to inform curriculum planning using "stepping stones".

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made in extending and developing opportunities for children to gain an awareness of cultures other than their own.

Children are learning how other people live, their cultures and beliefs, and to appreciate that people have things in common as well as being different, through topics and themes, celebrating festivals such as Diwali, Eid and Christmas, visitors to the setting and practical activities such as cooking and craft activities. This is now an area of strength with resources to support.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children form good relationships with staff and relate well to each other. They co-operate, negotiate and share resources and care for each other in the home corner and hospital role play. They are confident, happy and separate from carers with ease. Children develop good concentration skills and listen intently to group stories. They persevere with activities with adult support when appropriate. Children are developing an awareness and respect for their own culture and others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children's speaking and listening skills are developing well and they can sustain conversations with adults and peers. Children's questioning skills are not sufficiently encouraged however. Labels are well used giving children opportunities to read familiar words and children show an understanding of the links between sounds and letters. However children do not spontaneously use the book corner and planned writing activities are not appropriate for the younger or less able children.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children use number in everyday situations and three and four year olds can count reliably to 10. They are beginning to recognise numerals and use non-standard ways of measuring such as using conkers. Children confidently use mathematical language to describe shape, position and size and show an understanding of the concept of "take away" when using fingers for calculation in songs and rhymes. There are less opportunities for introducing concepts such as combining groups of numbers.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children have lots of good opportunities to find out about their environment and the natural world and to look at similarities, patterns and change, both in planned activities and as part of the daily routine, for example when discussing the weather at group time. Planned topics enable children to find out about past events in their own lives and those of others including developing an understanding of other cultures. They have daily opportunities to use the computer.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have frequent opportunities for movement, climbing and balancing both indoors and out. They show good co-ordination and an awareness of space. They enjoy using a wide range of tools and equipment, which they do with developing control. However, children should have the opportunity to use "real" knives for activities like making sandwiches. Tools should also be made more accessible to encourage spontaneous design and creativity. Children are beginning to learn about keeping healthy.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children enjoy listening to and experimenting with the sounds of their voices being played through a tape recorder, with musical instruments, singing songs and moving their bodies to music. They enjoy role-play in a variety of situations and are learning to communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings. Children enjoy free art and exploring colour but there are limited opportunities for children to express their imagination and creativity using different textures, shape and materials.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- provide frequent opportunities for children to freely explore shape, textures, materials and resources for sticking, cutting and joining to enable them to use their imagination and creativity in art, design and construction.
- improve the programme for communication, language and literacy to provide children with frequent opportunities to develop their questioning as to how and why things happen and work, their early writing skills and a respect for and personal enjoyment of books.
- continue to develop the system of curriculum planning and assessment of children's progress, using "stepping stones" from the Foundation Stage curriculum so that:
 - i) "next steps" are identified through evaluations of activities and monitoring children's progress
 - ii) activities build upon what children know and offer appropriate challenges for each child.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.