



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 402043

DfES Number: 515483

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	08/06/2004
Inspector Name	Lynn Clements

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Little Fishes Pre-School
Setting Address	St Mary's Church Centre Churchgate Street Old Harlow Essex CM17 0JR

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Little Fishes Pre-School Committee 249505
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### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Little Fishes Pre-School Committee
Address	St Mary's Church Centre Churchgate Street Old Harlow Essex CM17 0JR

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and 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 Pre-School opened in 1992. The group operates from the main hall in St Mary's Church Centre, Old Harlow. The pre-school serves the local and surrounding communities.

There are currently 26 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 19 funded three year olds and 7 funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special educational needs and has effective strategies in place for children with English as an additional language.

The pre-school opens three days a week during school term times. Sessions run from 09:30 until 12:15 Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Five full time staff and one volunteer work with the children. All the full time staff have relevant early years qualifications. The pre-school works closely with the area special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) and the Early Years Development Partnership (EYDCP).

### How good is the Day Care?

Little Fishes Pre-school provides good quality care for children.

The setting employs qualified, motivated staff who work well as a team. It is well organised and staff understand their roles and responsibilities. The premises offer an exciting and child centred learning environment, which is welcoming for children and parents. Documents are kept safe and are consistent with the National Standards, however the child protection policy requires minor alterations and additions. An effective operational plan provides continuity for the settings in the absence of senior staff.

Staff are aware of safety issues and daily risk assessments are currently being formalised. The premises are secure, with effective systems for the safe arrival and collection of children. Staff promote good hygiene practices and take appropriate

action when children are ill to avoid cross infection. Healthy snacks are available daily and staff take the opportunity to discuss healthy eating. Children learn about similarities and differences through activities, topics, resources and positive staff attitudes. There are good procedures in place to ensure any concerns regarding children are dealt with appropriately.

Staff use the Foundation Stage curriculum to help plan a broad and balanced range of meaningful activities and quality learning opportunities. These help children to make good progress in all six areas of learning. The SENCO works closely with parents and other professionals enabling children with special needs to make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff's consistent approach supports children's good behaviour.

Parents are kept informed about their child's progress and two way communication record books gives staff valuable information from home about what children can do which is used to further support children's assessment records within the setting. Parents are encouraged to share in their children's pre-school experiences.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

At the last inspection the following actions were raised:

Ensure the daily registers show arrival and departure times of children and staff; update the complaints procedure to include the regulators contact details; revise the group's child protection policy to include information for staff and volunteers regarding allegations of abuse; ensure that toilet door locks are safe, to prevent children becoming trapped.

The setting has added session times to the register and records any early pick up or late arrivals. The complaints policy now contains the regulators name and contact details and is available for parents in the pre-school prospectus. The child protection policy has been revised, however the revision was incorrectly inserted into the complaints policy so a recommendation from this inspection will be to amend the revision into the child protection policy. Finally on closer inspection the toilet locks are accessible from the outside. All actions have been met appropriately.

#### **What is being done well?**

- Partnership with parents is very strong. Good two way communication record books ensure children's individual needs are met and continuity of care between home and pre-school is of a very high standard. Notice boards and newsletters provide valuable information about the setting and the early years curriculum, encouraging parents to support the setting and share in their child's experiences.
- Special education needs strategies and the personal and supportive approach of staff helps to ensure the needs of children and their families are met. Clear observations enable staff to plan appropriately helping children with special needs to make good progress in all areas of learning.

- Behaviour is very good. staff act as consistent positive role models, listening to children, giving them time to think things through and helping them respond appropriately. Children support each other taking turns, sharing fairly and respecting each other.

#### What needs to be improved?

- staff appraisal systems
- information contained in the child protection policy
- daily risk assessments.

#### Outcome of the inspection

Good

#### CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

*All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.*

*As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.*

#### WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

#### The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
2	Formalise a staff appraisal system to ensure staff are fully supported and their professional development is addressed to always maintain an appropriate skill base. Work with the EYDCP advisor to ensure older early years qualifications are updated.
6	Review the daily risk assessment procedures to ensure shared areas remain safe for children attending the pre-school.
13	Transfer information for staff and volunteers regarding allegations of abuse from the complaints policy into the child protection policy, also include contact names and telephone numbers of the local police and social services.

## 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 Pre-school is good. It enables children to make generally good progress in mathematical development and very good progress in all other areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. All full time staff hold relevant qualifications. Senior staff monitor and evaluate teaching practice to ensure staff are working appropriately with children. Staff provide a rich learning environment for children to explore. Staff have good relationships with children, asking questions to help develop their thinking skills and extend their ideas. Staff are caring and sensitive to children's needs and they provide stimulating activities. Behaviour is very good due to staffs support, positive attitudes and strategies of praise and encouragement.

Staff observe children and record their progress. Assessment records are clear and meaningful. Whilst staff clearly demonstrate a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and support children's learning effectively, written planning does not reflect the high standards of teaching. Short term planning does not yet take into consideration differentiation to meet the needs of older more able children, and does not identify clear learning objectives or ensure all six areas of learning are being addressed. Provision for children who need extra support is very good.

Leadership and management is generally good. The manager and staff meet regularly to discuss the daily running of the group and a child focussed curriculum. However, effective systems are not yet in place to promote staffs professional development, or identify the settings future direction.

Partnership with parents is very good. Staff are friendly and approachable and regularly share information with parents both written and verbal. Parents are confident with the support of the setting and feel included in their child's experiences.

### What is being done well?

- Staff have a thorough understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum which enables them to work towards the individual needs of children. Staff organise activities to suit different ages and stages of development. They recognise that one activity can cover various areas of learning, such as bees, which incorporates creative work and also knowledge and understanding of the world when looking at information books to see bees in their natural habitat.
- Children are making very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Staff organise the setting and encourage children to use and develop their independence skills. Children wash their hands and see to their personal needs, such as going to the toilet. They select their own

snacks and pour drinks. Children have daily opportunities to talk about objects of interest which they have brought from home for registration show and tell, building their confidence and self esteem to speak in familiar groups.

- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world is very successful. Staff spend time ensuring that activities build upon what children already know. Role play situations, such as hospitals and hairdressers, including appropriate props and resources, support children's understanding and previous experiences. Staff use open questions and suggest ideas to extend children's vocabulary, play and learning.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the planning documents
- opportunities for children to develop their calculating skills in relation to subtraction.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

At the last inspection the following key issues were raised:

To provide more opportunities for children to respond to cultural and religious events.

Plan more activities for four year olds so they can compare, sort, count and order using everyday objects.

The celebration of cultural and religious festivals are now integrated throughout the planning of yearly topic work and children have opportunities to study similarities and differences of other cultures and beliefs.

Planning of more hands on mathematical activities for four year olds has been developed and now includes small group sessions where children have the opportunity to sort buttons and compare shapes according to size, colour and type.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children's confidence and self esteem are high and they are supported by staff who know them well. Children are encouraged to think for themselves, selecting activities and resources, preparing snacks, pouring drinks and taking care of their personal hygiene. Children's behaviour is good, they share resources, take turns to blow bubbles and paint at the easels. Children learn about the needs of others when taking part in 'children in need' sponsored activities and 'toddle waddles' for charity.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are keen to communicate with each other. Staff bring stories to life encouraging children to act them out and join in repeated refrains such as 'Handa's Surprise' and 'The Three Little Pigs.' Children know that books can be used to access information. Labels around the setting help children understand that print carries meaning and staff organise regular local walks to notice environmental print. Children are linking sounds to letters developing phonic knowledge for later learning.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Staff use everyday opportunities to develop children's understanding of number. Children are encouraged to count each other at registration and during number and circle games. They also count the cups needed at snack time. Children discover capacity and quantity when playing in sand and water trays and making Belgium bread pudding. Children learn lots about addition during activities and role play. However, opportunities to promote ideas of subtraction and linking it to taking away are missed.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Staff support children's understanding and investigation of similarities and differences between cultures and religions and the awareness of other customs. Staff provide first hand experiences for children such as growing cress from seed and tasting sweet and sour foods. Children observe weather changes and seasons of the year and make visits around the local area including the post office where they learn about communicating by letter. They discover the wider world using maps and globes.

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children explore large and small apparatus, tools and equipment. They visit the local park, developing their climbing and balancing skills when using the frame, slide and bridge. Spatial awareness is good. They use wheeled toys and dance to music carefully avoiding each other. Children develop fine motor skills making toast and sandwiches for snack, using scissors, pens and paintbrushes during activities. They manipulate malleable materials such as dough and clay, pulling and stretching it.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Staff provide good opportunities for children to use their imagination and develop their ideas, such as singing, using musical instruments and making collages. Children become doctors, nurses and princesses. They join in role play hospitals and hairdressers developing ideas from real and imagined experiences. Children sing songs from memory such as 'happy birthday' and months of the year song. They explore textures of sand, water and corn flour adding food colourings and observing the change.

**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**

- develop the current planning documents to ensure all six areas of learning are reflected in the short term plans along side clear learning intentions and differentiation for older and more able children
- provide opportunities for children to increase their calculating skills, building their mathematical vocabulary in subtraction and relating it to taking away thereby enabling them to say with confidence when they have one less.

*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.*

## **SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS**

### **STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON**

*Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.*

### **STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION**

*The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.*

### **STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY**

*The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.*

### **STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

*The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.*

### **STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT**

*Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.*

### **STANDARD 6 - SAFETY**

*The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.*

### **STANDARD 7 - HEALTH**

*The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.*

### **STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK**

*Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.*

### **STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

*The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.*

### **STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)**

*The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is*

*proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.*

#### **STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR**

*Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.*

#### **STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

*The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.*

#### **STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION**

*The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.*

#### **STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION**

*Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.*