

Little Fishes Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

Kelly Eyre

Setting address

4 Molivers Lane,, Bromham, Bedford, Bedfordshire, MK43
8JT

Telephone number

01234 825152

Email

manager@littlefishes-bromham.co.uk

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 Day Nursery opened in 2006 and is privately owned. It operates from a purpose-built building in Bromham, near Bedford. A slope to the main entrance means that the premises are accessible. Children have access to the fully enclosed outdoor play areas.

The setting receives funding for early education. It is open each weekday throughout the year and sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to provide 53 places and there are currently 88 children on roll who are within this age group. The setting serves a wide catchment area, including the surrounding villages. A small number of children attend other settings such as local pre-schools and childminders. The setting currently supports a small number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 19 staff members. Ten of these hold childcare qualifications to the equivalent of National Vocational Qualifications Level 3 and above and six hold Level 2 qualifications. One staff member is currently working towards a qualification and one has achieved Early Years Professional Status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's needs are consistently met and they make good progress because staff work well with parents and develop a thorough understanding of children's needs. They use this knowledge to inform daily planning and ensure that children are included and offered activities that promote their learning. Key strengths of the setting are the excellent procedures relating to safeguarding and the staff's confidence in enabling children to develop their own play. Children play confidently, taking an active role in their learning and developing positive attitudes to this, which prepare them for the transition to school. Effective self-evaluation procedures support the ongoing review of the setting, enabling them to prioritise improvements and offer a service which is responsive to children's needs.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- improve the systems for organisation of the setting by developing the use of self-evaluation to support ongoing improvements
- aid further children's progression towards the early learning goals by providing additional opportunities for them to use writing for different purposes and to use their developing mathematical skills to solve practical problems.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Highly effective safeguarding procedures ensure that children are protected and their welfare is consistently promoted. Training relating to safeguarding children is regularly updated and there are robust procedures to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Exceptionally thorough risk assessments and practical daily checks mean that children's safety is promoted. Good practice and procedures enable children to build up a thorough understanding of safety issues. For example, staff offer children ongoing explanations and involve them in discussions about safety and the appropriate use of equipment. The provision of nutritious snacks and meals mean that children's health and development are promoted.

Staff maintain good relationships with parents and carers. This enables them to exchange information and ensure that children are consistently offered appropriate care and support. Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress and activities. For example, the setting makes use of newsletters, informative displays and daily communication sheets for younger children. The setting also has good procedures for liaising with other professionals involved with the children. For example, they share information with pre-schools and childminders, enabling them to work together to promote children's development.

The owner, manager and staff demonstrate a commitment to improving the setting's practice and, therefore, the outcomes for children. The honest evaluation of all areas of work supports the setting's self-evaluation. This means they have a clear overview of their practice and are aware of areas for improvement. Feedback from parents and children is also used to help develop plans which lead to improvements. For example, recent changes include improved assessment methods, which mean that children's interests are fed directly into the overall planning. Although there is a clear vision for the future, self-evaluation is not fully utilised to inform the overall review of practice. Practical procedures, clear information and ongoing monitoring help to ensure that staff have a good understanding of issues relating to anti-discriminatory practice. This supports them in providing a service which is inclusive for all children. They make sure that they understand children's background and needs, using this information when planning activities. Resources are used well to support children's learning and development. For example, the setting uses local facilities such as the park, shops and village hall.

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

Children make good progress in all areas of learning because staff have a confident knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They implement thorough procedures for assessing children, using information gained from this to directly inform activity planning. This ensures that children's interests are recognised and their individual development is supported. However, this is not fully promoted as staff do not always fully utilise opportunities for children to use

writing for a range of purposes. Similarly, children are not consistently encouraged to use their mathematical skills to solve simple daily problems.

Staff confidently encourage children to develop their own play, supporting this and adapting the planning to suit the needs and interests of the children. Children's independence is therefore promoted, enabling them to play an active role in their learning and thus develop skills for the future. They show great curiosity and a desire to explore and learn. For example, children play outside in the snow and then bring some in to explore further, using Petri dishes and magnifying glasses. Children also show excellent skills in working alongside their peers. For example, children play with the cars in the role play area and then decide to turn this into a doctor's surgery; they work together to collect appropriate resources, discussing the various roles and deciding who will play these.

The consistent approach to behaviour management enables children to feel secure and develop their understanding of appropriate behaviour. Staff offer children ongoing explanations, encouraging them to share and work together. Children respond positively to this and demonstrate a mature sense of responsibility. Their understanding of diversity is promoted as they participate in structured activities and access relevant resources. For example, they eat traditional dishes from a range of countries, share their family traditions and listen to music from around the world. The good procedures for working with parents and others mean that staff are able to adapt activities and offer appropriate support to children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. For example, they work with parents to learn key words in the child's home language.

Staff's vigilance means that children's play is extended and their enjoyment enhanced. For example, a staff member notes babies and young children enjoying a story and introduces a 'story sack'; the children thoroughly enjoy holding the soft toy characters, laughing and giggling as they try to repeat the names and join in with the story. Children of all ages enjoy many opportunities to explore music and rhythm. For example, babies enjoy action rhymes, toddlers enjoy moving in time to music and older children explore musical instruments. Children are gaining a clear understanding of the relevance of good health practices. For example, they enjoy yoga sessions, discussing the importance of warming up and noting the effects of exercise, such as raised heartbeats.

Children's development is promoted as staff make use of use children's interests. For example, after noting a group of children enjoying role play associated with rockets, staff extend this; the children become engrossed in activities such as making junk model space ships and participating in associated rhymes. Good staff interaction promotes children's confident use of language. For example, young children laugh as they repeat new words, whilst older children competently explain their role play and discuss extending this.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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