

Little Fishes Pre-School (Brackley)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	219979
Inspection date	08/12/2010
Inspector	Jan Burnet
Setting address	Brackley Baptist Church, Waynflete Close, Brackley, Northamptonshire, NN13 6AE
Telephone number	01280 705295
Email	
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*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Little Fishes Pre-School opened in 1994 and operates from a space within Brackley Baptist Church in Brackley, Northamptonshire. The pre-school operates term time only, Monday to Friday from 9.15am to 12.15pm. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There is a ramp at the entrance.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 20 children may attend at any one time and all may be in the early years age group. There are currently 22 children in the early years age group on roll. The pre-school supports children with learning disabilities and/or difficulties and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs four staff. The manager holds a Level 4 early years qualification, the deputy is qualified to Level 3 and one staff member is qualified to Level 2 and is working towards Level 3 in early years. The group holds Pre-school Learning Alliance membership.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff meet children's individual developmental needs successfully and promote children's welfare effectively. The planning for improvement including processes of self-evaluation is good. The pre-school committee, manager and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to ensuring sustained improvement. They are aware of strengths and areas for improvement and they work well together to ensure that the needs of children, parents and carers are met. The partnership with parents is outstanding and effective partnerships in the wider context result in very good quality education and care. Comprehensive information obtained from parents helps staff to identify and address children's differences.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend practice to ensure that the observation and assessment system has an equal impact for every child.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. Staff assess and minimise risks successfully on a daily basis and a written risk assessment record is kept and is reviewed regularly. They are aware of the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children

Board procedures and their responsibility to protect children from abuse. Induction information for parents is thorough and includes the safeguarding procedure. The committee and manager ensure that procedures for recruitment, selection and induction are robust. Staff members' suitability is thoroughly checked before they have unsupervised access to children. Good health and well-being is promoted effectively and necessary steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection. Staff teach children about keeping safe and healthy.

Self-evaluation is thorough and clearly identifies priorities for improvement. Success in obtaining a Capital Grant has meant that the pre-school will be re-locating in January 2011 into an extension to the church premises that consists of a large playroom, reception area, toilets and a storage room. A large outdoor play area adjacent to the new playroom will allow children to choose outdoor activities throughout the morning session. Another current focus is fundraising for additional information communication and technology resources. Recommendations raised at the time of the last inspection have been addressed well. These link to a regular review of the operational plan and developing a system to obtain information on progress from parents that can inform their child's planning. External evaluation is welcomed and the staff team work closely with local authority advisors. Resources meet the needs of children well and staff deployment is good. Documentation and records are kept up-to-date and in good order.

The partnership with parents is outstanding. A superior settling-in procedure is organised to meet the needs of individual children and includes a home visit if parents are agreeable. Parents are invited to spend as long as necessary settling their child and during this time, the child's key person finds out as much as possible about the child. Copies of all policies are provided and information is displayed on notice boards. Excellent systems are in place to obtain and provide information on children's welfare, achievements and progress, and to act upon it. 'All about me' paperwork is initially completed by parents, 'home/school' books are shared and parents' evenings are organised. Parents are invited to attend for evening meetings that focus on particular issues, for example, literacy and phonological development for boys. Newsletters are provided, parents are invited to attend as volunteers, questionnaires are provided annually and a comments/suggestions box is always available. A fundraising group, 'Friends of Little Fishes', has been set up by parents. Several parents share extremely complimentary views on the service provided. They are very happy with the settling-in procedure, the share of verbal and written information, and they explain how enthusiastic their children are about the pre-school. Good systems are in place for establishing and maintaining links with other providers in order to provide consistency of care and education for children.

A high priority is given to providing effective inclusive care. Staff are fully aware of each child's background due to thorough admission information and excellent communication with parents. Children are encouraged to recognise their own unique qualities and characteristics they share with others. Toys and play equipment reflect diversity and effectively meet the developmental needs of the children who attend.

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

Children make good progress in all areas of learning and development in a stimulating environment. The quality of assessment and planning for most children is of a very high standard as it is carefully informed through regular observations of children during play. However, systems need to be more thoroughly implemented in order to plan for next learning steps. Children's personalities, likes and interests are well known and this information is used effectively to ensure that they are happy, settled and enjoying their time at pre-school. Staff have a comprehensive understanding of each child's background and are highly effective in ensuring all children are well integrated. Children with learning disabilities and/or difficulties and English as an additional language are supported effectively.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is exceptional. They are settled, secure, very happy, and eager to take part in activities. Staff encourage children to recognise and talk about their feelings and how their behaviour may have an impact on others. Children are learning to take turns and share. They gain an awareness of their similarities and differences as they play with books and toys that reflect diversity and learn about different food, clothing, language and customs. Children learn about care for the environment as recycling is strongly promoted by staff. The difference between how boys and girls learn is recognised and inspiring boys to practise writing skills in a range of different ways is given a high priority. Children enjoy looking at books and choose favourite ones for staff to read. Independence is encouraged as children can choose and select resources from low-level shelving. Staff ensure that there is a good balance of supported and child initiated play and friendships have formed amongst older children as they play cooperatively in pairs and small groups.

Children enjoy a range of opportunities to develop skills with use of large physical play equipment. They climb, ride, negotiate an obstacle course and practise balancing. A Forest School Project enables children to enjoy an outdoor experience that promotes their independence, confidence and communication skills as well as an understanding of the outdoors. They explore for bugs and insects, collect leaves and twigs, play games and build dens. Children develop an awareness of their own needs in relation to other living things as they plant and grow bulbs and seeds. They learn good hygiene practices and choose healthy options at snack time. Children learn safety rules for the Forest School for use of equipment, such as scissors in the playroom, and for road safety. Visitors to the pre-school include police officers who talk with children about 'stranger danger'. Children develop good manipulative skills as they play with a range of safe small toys and tools. They enjoy access to a range of graphics materials, mould and make marks in dough and are developing skills as they practice writing for a range of different purposes. For example, children wrap presents for under the Christmas tree and write their name on sticky labels for the parcels.

Older children confidently count objects with one-to-one correspondence. Staff are aware of children's different stages and encourage the younger children to learn to

count and recognise numerals initially to three and then to five. Numbers are displayed as labels throughout the setting and games encourage children to count and find a corresponding numeral. Children's mathematical awareness is promoted with a range of activities. For example, as they explore the texture of cold cooked spaghetti they measure and cut the spaghetti into different lengths.

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	2
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	1

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	2
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	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met